

Submitter: Emily Frances King
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5525

Senator Janeen Sollman
Representative Ricki Ruiz
Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Senate Bill 5525 –Fully Fund Dispute Resolution

Dear Senator Sollman and Representative Ruiz and Members of the Committee.

Our state has many important funding priorities, including investing in programs that are proven to show that they help to empower people, build resilient communities, and save the state millions of dollars in other costs. Resolution Oregon does exactly that.

I write today in support of Community Dispute Resolution, which passes through Resolution Oregon at the University of Oregon and helps to provide valuable education and mediation services all across the State.

I have worked with the Hillsboro Mediation Program for several years in both personal and professional contexts. When I worked for Second Home, a program of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, we partnered with HMP to help craft housing contracts between housing-insecure high school students and volunteer host home providers. This crucial part of the program helped students and home providers be set up for a successful housing situation and helped have hard conversations around expectations.

I was also able to take part in the forty-hour in-person training provided by the Hillsboro Mediation Program and the Hillsboro Police Department to become a certified mediator. This training taught me incredible skills and showed me the invaluable contribution that resolution centers like Hillsboro Mediation Center provide to the community. Mediation is a difficult thing to do well and investing in these programs is something I ask you to fight for. I have recommended the Hillsboro Mediation Program to countless friends, family, and strangers. Having conversations

in an increasingly divided country is becoming harder and harder, and so in the interest of community safety, this is not the time to cut funding to these incredible community resources.

Resolution Oregon's statewide network provides conflict resolution education for youth and adult community members, mediation services, and connects people to local support service providers (e.g., financial resources, legal aid, rehousing & credit counseling). For more than 40 years, these services have been shown to help communities improve graduation rates, reduce crime recidivism rates, and resolve disputes faster and cheaper than courts. These preventative services help reduce community costs for incarceration, health care, and associated court costs, and keep people housed who are at risk of foreclosure and eviction.

Please help our vulnerable community members by investing in cost-effective mediation services that are complementary to other avenues for justice. Please fully fund Dispute Resolution in the Statewide Programs section of SB 5525.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Best,
E. Frances King