

Submitter: Ryan Kearney

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2251

Thank you all in advance for your time and efforts on behalf of your constituents!

As a parent and pediatrician in Central Oregon, I hope to see HB 2251 pass and help remove cell phones from our schools. We are all navigating the vanishingly few convenient benefits complicated by the increasingly numerous consequences inherent to the portable super-computers we all carry. Somehow we still call these devices 'phones.'

Plain and simple, children deserve the gift of childhood. I believe screen access, particularly in the context of highly addictive technology like social media, is a realm where legislation can make a meaningful and outcome-altering impact. Most parent-peers and friends I speak with acknowledge that we wish our own lives and homes were more screen-free. I also hear from families every day in my office and out in our community that there is near-universal support for removing smartphones from our schools. To protect the magic and gift of childhood, we should all strive to ensure schools remain a place for children to connect with their peers and teachers in-person, without the uniquely problematic distraction of smartphones and personal electronic devices. As the data tell us, these devices disproportionately have negative consequences for children. Addictive technologies have been shown to create and reinforce social conflict, attention problems and emotional stress.

So, let's make this bold change for our schools and be an example for other states to follow!