

Submitter: Beth Krisko

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4112

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Forests Today & Forever, I am writing to urge your support for Representative Zach Hudson's legislation to restore \$6 million in funding for Outdoor School in 2026.

Forests Today & Forever is a Eugene-based nonprofit dedicated to forestry education through hands-on, outdoor learning experiences for youth across Oregon. We see firsthand the impact Outdoor School has on students—particularly 6th graders—by connecting classroom science to real-world learning in forests, watersheds, and working landscapes.

The 20% funding cut enacted last year has already resulted in shortened camp experiences, limiting students' opportunities to fully engage in experiential learning.

Outdoor School is a cornerstone of environmental and forestry education in Oregon, fostering curiosity, stewardship, leadership, and a deeper understanding of natural resource management in ways no classroom alone can provide.

Oregon voters made their priorities clear when they passed Measure 99: lottery dollars should support Outdoor School. Restoring this funding honors both the will of voters and the educational needs of students across our state.

We respectfully ask you to protect this vital program by restoring Outdoor School funding in the February session and rejecting further cuts. Oregon's students—and the future of our forests—depend on it.

Sincerely,

Beth Krisko

Forests Today & Forever