

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs, and members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing on behalf of AFT-Oregon. We are a labor federation representing workplace unions across the state in early learning, K-12 schools, and across our state's college and university landscape. Our 28 unions represent over 18,000 essential staff, instructors, faculty, and employees who support our students and advocate for the public good. **AFT-Oregon fully supports HB 4154 and urge its passage.**

Teachers, staff, parents, and communities across the country are grappling with chronic absenteeism and its impacts. We have insight into the current situation that is incredibly valuable thanks to the remarkable leadership of the late Representative Hoa Nguyen. She worked relentlessly on Chronic Absenteeism both in legislation and in leading the Chronic Absenteeism Workgroup in 2024. We know that chronic absenteeism is widespread in our state, we know its impact on student learning and outcomes, and we also know proposed legislative initiatives the workgroup put forward.

Principal among the legislative proposals was investing in attendance data collection, public reporting, and technical assistance towards its implementation for districts. We cannot truly tackle what we simply do not have reliable, consistent, diligent statewide data that we can disaggregate, dissect, and dig into. We need to smartly target this issue with supportive investments towards the communities who need it most – such as chronic absenteeism among students with disabilities and those experiencing homelessness, or for those with transportation needs. With this data our districts and state can dig in more substantively. Classified staff need your support to support our students.

HB 4154 is important for AFT-Oregon and our K12 classified staff members who work hard each day to support all their students. Years from now, through good data collection, analysis, and addressing student needs head on, they will be even better equipped to do so.

Sincerely,



Harper Haverkamp, PhD
American Federation of Teachers – Oregon (AFT-Oregon)