

Submitter: James Haugh

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4112

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing to express my support for the continual funding of Outdoor School.

I am a resident of Clackamas County, a freshman at Lake Oswego High School, an intern with Our Future, and I believe Outdoor School provides meaningful educational opportunities that benefit students across the state.

I remember when I was a little kid, and the sixth graders at my school would return from Outdoor School, their faces lit up with joy as they unloaded from the bus, recounting their adventures to all of us other schoolchildren. Seeing them get back built up huge anticipation in me over the years. I was so excited to experience what I had heard others rave about. And when the day finally came, Outdoor school did not disappoint. I bonded so much with my cabin mates, going on group hikes, playing gaga ball outside, and playing rounds of poker in our down time. During that great week of fun, I become so close with them, people I had only been slight acquaintances with previously. I look back on that time fondly, and one of my favorite memories was when we went out late at night to an open field. Us, being from urban areas, had not expected much when our cabin instructor told us to look up. However, when we did, we were met with a sight that has inspired my interest in science since. The sky that night was filled with small pockets of light and wonder, decorating the night with beauty. That is what is so important about Outdoor School-the wonder it creates. Wonder that is only possible outside of the classroom, in the midst of nature. Wonder I know others found in multiple other places that week. That is what we lose when we restrict funding. Last year, my cousin was in 6th grade, eagerly looking forward to going himself. However, he was denied this educational opportunity, simply because he was being homeschooled. I was so disappointed in this injustice, given my incredible memories. Everyone should get to go to Outdoor School and that is why you must provide adequate funding, which voters approved with Measure 99.

I respectfully urge the Oregon Legislature to continue supporting this incredible program so it remains accessible to future generations of Oregon youth. Please support House Bill 4112.

Sincerely,
James Haugh