

Written testimony in support of Senate Bill 1572

Chair and Members of the House Committee,

Imagine going to the movie theaters. People are all facing the same direction, half of the people have snacks or refreshments, hushed mutters of excitement in anticipation for the experience purchased. The entire audience is sharing a moment together, until a person treads out of social bounds by making loud noises, has their phone conversation on speaker for the world to hear, climbing over the cushioned seats, clumsily spilling their popcorn, making a mess for someone else to clean, interrupting the introduction of the show.

Furthermore, the boisterous guest, now in a dysregulated state, unprovokingly begins swatting, kicking, shouting slurs - no doubt rated R- and throwing items at audience members out of misinformation of seat assignments. One innocent seated member has their glasses broken by the disgruntled person and the other ducks for cover out of fear of abstaining from bodily harm. Essentially, and effectively, the interrupting patron has ruined the experience for others.

Now, while the film is rolling, the manager of the movie theater announces and begins urging the seated, compliant, paying members of the entire audience to leave their seats and exit the theater that they all purchased to experience so the staff can prioritize their needs for decompression discussion, support tools, and a learning opportunity for the interrupting guest.

The owner of the theater will take time away from their family and livelihood to restore their theater. Then take their money earned from their own business in order for the theater cushions to be reupholstered. The floor that needs to be cleaned and sanitized. Not to mention the repairs to items and physical pain the undeserving audience members received from the uncontrollable person. It will be a wonder if the theater staff will continue their employment for the pay, joy, and safety - physically and psychologically- after the reoccurring disrupting events. This audience will never get that experience back. They missed the anticipated program, shared experience, and cannot re-enter that theater because of the mess and disturbance made.

Is going to the theater safe? Not "if" this scenario will occur again, but "when." At the next showing? In the next theater? Tomorrow?

The scenario above is all too familiar in the education setting for children. The group of people most eager to learn in comparison is the audience members who are missing out on their education because of a small percentage that is disturbing their environment, hurting other children and staff, and causing places now deemed as unsafe for all. As a result, quality educators are leaving the field of education. The impact extends beyond immediate safety concerns. Ongoing disruption contributes to educator burnout, staff turnover, and difficulty recruiting experienced, highly qualified professionals. Districts then rely more heavily on inexperienced or under-trained staff, which can further destabilize learning environments and strain compliance systems. This cycle does not serve students, staff, or families.

Students deserve safe, stable, and uninterrupted access to instruction. Educators deserve workplaces where physical assault or injury is not considered an expected condition of

employment. Yet increasingly, educators report that being hit, kicked, bitten, or otherwise harmed has become normalized in certain settings. No profession should require employees to anticipate assault as part of their daily responsibilities.

The rights of a small percentage of students should not be imposed on the majority, who do not have the same rights.

Restricting funding, (which often the largest expense for districts is staffing because staffing supports the needs for many students) declaring bills, laws, regulations that are near impossible to measure up to with the range of diverse needs impacting the learning process.

The esteemed and covetedness of being an educator no longer exists. The expectations of a teacher whose not only focus is on the education of all students, is convoluted with the other aspects that come with the state of children's behaviors, disabilities, ineffective parenting, parents entitlement students, and out of balanced expectations of educators.

As a special Education Teacher for 11 years, I am deeply knowledgeable of the rights for children with disabilities pertaining to Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA). Therefore, I acknowledge how the vagueness of the bill surrounding the removal of a disruptive student could cause irreparable harm, potential fallout regarding exclusionary practice, limit or diminish access to instruction, services, and access to peers.

I have expertise in creation and use of quality instruction, effective Individual Education Plans (IEP), data collection and analysis, collaboration with specialists, education staff, parents and students, and facilitation of IEP and related meetings. I advocate for inclusion as much as appropriate/possible, I advocate for students to be with same-age peers as much as appropriate/possible, I advocate for quality instruction for growth, interventions, staff training for safety, trauma- informed care, and medical needs/care of students as much as appropriate/possible.

It is precisely because of this experience that I believe clarity in SB 1572 is necessary. When a student is dysregulated to the point of being unsafe or significantly disruptive, the whole-class environment may not be the most appropriate setting at that moment—for that student or for their peers. Structured, well-documented removals paired with clear intervention plans can:

- Protect the safety and dignity of all students and staff.
- Provide opportunities for targeted social-emotional instruction and self-regulation support.
- Allow students to practice accountability and skill-building before returning to class.
- Ensure documentation that drives meaningful behavioral interventions.

Currently, many informal removals go undocumented due to unclear expectations and unmanageable systems. Without accurate data, schools cannot effectively design interventions, allocate resources, or provide necessary staff training. Transparent documentation of removals

can serve as a catalyst for improved behavioral supports, restorative practices, parent partnership, and professional development.

Also addressed in SB 1572 are essential skills and retainment of students for lagging literacy skills. The real possibility of causation for decreasing and low growth rates of literacy skills learned and retained from the frequent interruptions and impact for “room clears” (when the infringement of learning larger population must stop instruction to leave the room for the safety and rights of the minority) could be correlated.

Referring back to the coveted profession of an educator, this aspect of the bill would return the focus to increased rigor, narrow the focus of education to the art and science of teaching, thus improvements demonstrated in increased learning results, and decreased stress associated with teacher burnout for multi-layered expectations beyond instructions. Proven positive instructional practices which allows all students to make learning gains.

In short, I am in support of SB 1572.

This bill is not about diminishing the rights of students with disabilities. It is about balancing rights with safety, instructional integrity, and appropriate placement decisions based on data. Inclusion must be meaningful and appropriate—not simply physical proximity at the expense of learning and safety.

SB 1572 offers the opportunity to:

- Protect the safety of staff and students.
- Safeguard instructional time and learning progress.
- Strengthen behavioral interventions through documentation and accountability.
- Restore focus to the art and science of teaching.
- Reduce educator burnout and improve retention.
- Increase academic rigor and student outcomes.

Oregon’s educators want to teach. Students want to learn. Families want safe and effective schools. SB 1572 moves us toward a more balanced, accountable, and sustainable system that honors all three.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 1572.

Respectfully,
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