

## Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs McIntire and Dobson, Members of the Committee,

I am writing today as a parent, educator, Oregonian, and most of all an avid supporter of Outdoor School for All students in Oregon, and I am asking you to pass HB 4112.

First of all, in 2016, Oregon voters overwhelmingly approved 4% of Lottery funds via Measure 99 to work toward sending every Oregon student to a week of Outdoor School. Everyone I come in contact with is surprised that a measure that is voted on and passed, can then later be changed. Measure 99 was truly the financial support that was needed for all students across the state to be able to go to ODS.

The reduction of lottery dollars to fund Outdoor School for All that occurred a year ago made a significant impact on programs around the state. The impact is not only on the 5th/6th graders, and their ODS experience, but also on the staff that works for each ODS site/program.

My first experience with ODS was as a 6th grader from Woodstock Elementary School, where with my fellow classmates learned about plants, soil, water, and animals, taking our classroom science into an outdoor classroom. As a high student I attended ODS 6 weeks throughout my sophomore - senior years. I grew in maturity, and confidence in my leadership abilities as I was a role model to 6th graders through teaching science, and community activities. My high school experience as a junior counselor lead to my 35 year career as an elementary school teacher. The experience of taking my own class of 6th graders to ODS was amazing! Not only did they take what we had learned in the classroom outdoors, but seeing them interact with each other and students from other schools through hands-on learning and growing as human beings in community with others. I watched students who struggled in a traditional school setting shine at ODS. I also got to experience my own children attending ODS as 6th graders. My younger son is on the autism spectrum, where traditional school settings do not always meet his needs, but the ODS community met him where he was, and he had a very positive experience. My older son not only was a 6th grader at ODS, but went on to be a staff member and the leadership skills led to him becoming a teacher. Outdoor School has definitely had an impact on our family - educationally, as well as the life long community we are connected with. After 35 years of teaching I returned to ODS to cook in the kitchen at Camp Angelos

Outdoor School is not like going to summer camp. The educational component is directly connected to state standards for Science, and the community piece is connected to Social and Emotional learning standards as well. Environmental education sets up future Oregonians to make well informed decisions about the state we live in. Not everything that students in 6th grade (or high school - student leaders) is everyone friendly, but ODS is set up for the success of ALL students.

To me something that impacts ALL students is a win for everyone now and for the future of Oregon.

Again I am urging you to not only support, but pass HB 4112.

Sincerely,

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