



OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

February 13, 2026

Senator Rob Wagner, President

Representative Julie Fahey, Speaker

Senator Kate Lieber, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

RE: Support funding for Native American Youth and Family Center

Dear President Wagner, Speaker Fahey, and co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the [Native American Youth and Family Center's](#) (NAYA) 2026 Capital Construction Legislative Request which would be included in SB 5701.

NAYA is a critical, wraparound service organization with 52 years of service to the Portland-metro region's Native American community. NAYA impacts the lives of more than 10,000 individuals by providing hundreds of thousands of hours of direct services, cultural, education, and critical supports to our region's Native Americans. More than 70,000 Native people from more than 380 tribes call the Portland-metro region home.

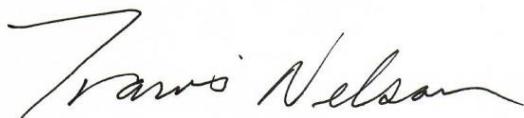
Most of NAYA's services are delivered from its 10-acre campus in the Cully neighborhood in Northeast Portland. NAYA's campus was formerly the Whitaker School, originally built in the 1950s and 60s. NAYA staff moved into this abandoned Portland Public Schools building in 2006 and purchased it at fair market value in 2008. Since 2006, NAYA has made substantial investments to improve the use, safety, accessibility, and security of the building. What was an abandoned school is now filled with youth attending the Many Nations Academy, families receiving interventions in domestic violence, Elders accessing free meals made daily by our chef in our kitchen, youth participating in creative and cultural programs, and thousands of pounds of produce and medicine grown in their 2-acre garden.

NAYA's leadership has fully retired their campus debt to ensure that the land and buildings remain in service to the community permanently, but the aging campus needs critical upgrades to ensure it will remain accessible and resilient for future generations.

This \$7-million request will replace their main building's roof, which is nearing the end of its useful life, make critical seismic improvements to ensure their main building withstands earthquakes, and upgrade their outdated heating and cooling system which are now failing. The state's investment will be nearly doubled by City, federal, private, and philanthropic support to cover the total cost of their project, which is approximately \$13-million.

It is imperative that NAYA's capital request is supported to ensure it can continue delivering culturally specific programs and essential services to the community in a space that are safe, accessible, culturally welcoming, and resilient for the thousands of people they serve now and for future generations.

Sincerely,



Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, North and Northeast Portland



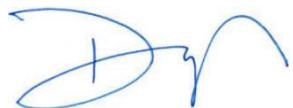
Representative Ricki Ruiz
House District 50, Gresham



Senator James Manning Jr.
Senate District 7, Eugene



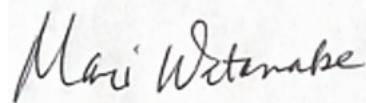
Representative Nathan Sosa
House District 30, Greater Hillsboro



Representative Daniel Nguyễn
House District 38, Lake Oswego and SW Portland



Senator Mark Meek
Senate District 20, Oregon City



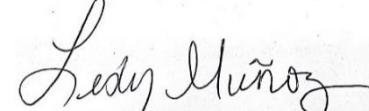
Representative Mari Watanabe
House District 34, Bethany and Cedar Mills



Representative Farrah Chaichi
House District 35, Beaverton and Aloha



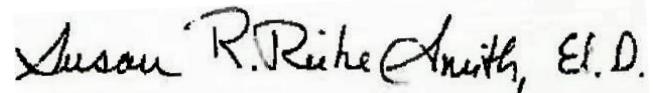
Senator Lew Frederick
Senate District 22, North and Northeast Portland



Representative Lesly Muñoz
House District 22, Woodburn



Representative Shannon Jones Isador
House District 33, SW Portland and Cathedral Park



Representative Sue Rieke Smith
House District 26, Sherwood and Wilsonville



Representative Jules Walters
House District 37, West Linn



Representative Mark Gamba
House District 41, Milwaukie



Representative Lamar Wise
House District 48, SE Portland and North Clackamas