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Dear Committee Members,

There is a movement happening in Oregon that Agriculture Teachers and CTE teachers have known about for a while now. Career and Technical Education keeps students engaged and in school. We are now seeing the impact of what happens when you cut CTE classes from schools. We have students dropping out of school, the state of Oregon is lacking skilled workers, and businesses are in search to fill vacant positions. We have students who are missing career, technical, and life skills, which you can argue are just as important as academic skills. Oregon voters want to change this.

This movement is seen not only by CTE teachers, but also by parents, community members, business leaders, and college administrators, which is the reason why voters overwhelmingly passed Measure 98. We have to address our statistic of having the 3rd lowest graduation rate in the country. That is embarrassing and is such an injustice to our young Oregonians.

I support Measure 98 because every day I see how CTE works. I see my students going straight into professions and trade schools that will save them time and money from graduating college with a general degree, many of which are in fields that are not in demand. Right now, students are lacking the career and technical skills needed to fill respectable, in demand, high wage jobs. I see students who are college bound, graduating high school with a handful of college credits earned from taking my classes, saving them money. In class, students see real life application and relevance to their lives, which keeps them coming back to school. I never hear "When am I ever going to use this?" because students know how they can apply it to their lives.

I didn't have CTE classes in high school so I had to learn career skills from my parents. Not all students have that advantage. As an Agriculture Teacher, I see the skills students practice in the classroom that they will apply for a lifetime whether they are college or career bound. People are now seeing the value in CTE classes. To have a prepared workforce is it essential to give these opportunities to every student in the state of Oregon. This not only benefits our students, but our local businesses, our communities, and our state. This is common sense and this is what Oregon wants. Our students deserve better. CTE works. Period.

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