

Greetings,

Below is a written version of my testimony I presented to the committee on April 6th in regards to SB 353_1.

Thank you for all the tireless work you perform for Oregon.

Thomas

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Good Afternoon,

Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity today. My name is Thomas McGregor and I serve as the Chief Operations Officer of Phoenix Public Charter High School in Roseburg. We serve at-risk youth of ten communities of Douglas County and we are committed to helping each one succeed. Our mission is rigorous standards of academic success including an Early College pipeline to Umpqua Community College (UCC), emphasis on career and technical skills, and person growth for all students. I'm here today to speak against "dash one" Amendment to Senate Bill 353. The three strategies of Measure 98 have been our organization's target for program expansion since last fall because we know they will make a difference in our community.

As a small school, I wish to illuminate how Measure 98 forma dollars would make an enormous difference. First, our Early College program currently uses AmeriCorps resources and deserves dedicated FTE. We do not believe community colleges can do these functions. In our experience, youth are not acculturated to the processes of a community college and they need help early from mentors they are already have connections. Currently, Phoenix School of Roseburg has over 30 youth attending UCC. Prior to our Early College program we only achieved two to three students per year enrolled.

Measure 98 geared dollars would directly result in our 17-18 budget targeting expansion of staff for GED instruction to assist Douglas County students 'off the couch' and back in the classroom. Currently, a 65% the on-time graduation rate for our community hovers around 65%. This program would create connections to CTE education and ensure pathways development for all enrolled. These funds would also allow for expansion of Advanced Manufacturing and Computer Tech CTE staffing and equipment. As Measure 98 was crafted, our school is ready to go to create change for Oregon's youth.

Finally, consider the backlash of two out of three voters in 'anti-tax' Douglas County who voted in favor of Measure 98. These business leaders and parents understand we have close 1,000 unfilled jobs in our community. We seek prepared youth to join the community workforce. I urge you to not corrode support for Salem by ignoring the desires of those in rural Oregon. I urge you to support the vision of Measure 98 as passed by the voters.

Thank you,

Thomas McGregor

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