



Date: 4/11/2019

To: Joint Committee on Student Success

RE: Position statement on HB 2019

Chairs Roblan and Smith Warner, Vice Chairs Knopp and Smith, and members of the Committee:

My name is Iris Hodge and I represent Main Street Alliance of Oregon. We are a network of 4,000 small business owners across the state who believe in investing in our communities. We have long fought for these investments in education and we offer our deepest gratitude for the herculean efforts made by this committee, to come up with this revenue plan, to give a dedicated \$2 billion a biennium to our schools.

The Student Success Act addresses many of our members concerns for their families and for employees families, like more mental health professionals, smaller class sizes, expanding early childhood education and offering more CTE and STEM classes. Oregon's schools have been under funded for nearly 30 years and the Student Success Act is a good first step in helping Oregon's students to be prepared and able to compete in today's world.

The clear plan to address funding inequities, for rural and low income communities, helps Oregon's most vulnerable students, get the level playing field they deserve. But respectfully, we believe we can do even better.

Small business owners don't mind paying their fair share of taxes and HB 2019 leaves many of our smallest businesses off the hook by exempting those below \$1 million. But with the addition of Complete Reporting we could get another \$100-200 million to expand this package to include investments for higher education or expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit. Both of these additions would be good for small businesses who need a skilled workforce and for the lowest earners in our communities to have a little extra money in their pockets.

The existing education package is promising and historic. Lawmakers should build on this foundation by expanding the investments and targeting tax benefits to Oregon's poorest, seniors, and working families.

Sincerely,
Iris Hodge

