



Date: 01/23/2025

Name: Cynthia Branger Muñoz

Committee: Senate Committee on Labor and Business

Bill: SB 849

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I am here on behalf of the Oregon Education Association (OEA), representing over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, from pre-k through our community colleges. Our members are teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, nutrition specialists, community college faculty and staff, and more.

OEA supports the concept of SB 849 as a practical step to provide immediate relief for districts facing financial challenges due to rising PERS costs. While this proposal is not a comprehensive solution to the broader PERS funding issues, it can serve as a critical stopgap for districts struggling with unexpected budget pressures—particularly those impacted by lower-than-anticipated yields from PERS side accounts.

We also recognize that many of these challenges have been inherited by current district administrations, who are working to manage long-standing financial obligations while prioritizing student learning and staff retention. SB 849 offers an opportunity to stabilize district budgets in the short term, helping schools retain educators and staff who are vital to student success.

However, we emphasize that this approach should complement—not replace—strategic, long-term planning. Thoughtful collaboration with the PERS Board will be essential to ensure these funds are applied equitably and effectively, prioritizing stability and minimizing disruptions to our school communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. OEA looks forward to working with the Legislature and the PERS Board to develop solutions that protect the educators and staff our students depend on while addressing the broader fiscal challenges districts face.



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