



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

**Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office**  
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"  
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201  
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519  
Email: [oaco.mail@state.or.us](mailto:oaco.mail@state.or.us)

Testimony on the importance of equity in the school funding formula  
Oregon School Funding Task Force, March 21, 2014

Dear Chair Devlin and Task Force members,

The Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), Black Affairs (OCBA), Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) and Commission for Women (OCFW) believes that equity in education is determined by how it invests in the learning of all its students. We encourage and challenge this Task Force to further build equity into its school funding formula, make tracking of funds to targeted groups clearer, and tie investments to the outcomes our communities need.

We know you take equity seriously and we have joined everyone on the Task Force in supporting legislation and policy that improve it. In the last 2 legislative sessions, the Advocacy Commissions have testified on 10 education bills all of which are aimed at improving equity: access, affordability, effects of poverty, ELL, teacher diversity, and early learning. We are partnering with OEIB and ODE on policy research aimed at other aspects of equity including school policies on discipline, and issue briefs laying out key statistics on Oregon's education challenges with an eye to improvement.

The Governor and the Legislature have worked successfully to find more resources in the slim Oregon budget to help fuel innovation and build better outcomes for all Oregonians: increasing graduation rates, reading by grade 3, ELL and bilingual education, STEM, vocational training, matriculation into higher education, teacher diversity and other areas that all affect equity.

We are not experts in school funding formulas, but we understand that if equity is not at the core of our investments in education, and if improvement in outcomes for struggling students is not the measure of our investment success we have small hope of achieving the goals of Oregon education reform. We support you in your work and offer help in any way.

Sincerely,

Stephen Ying, Chair, OCAPIA

Alberto Moreno, Chair

James I Manning, Jr., Chair, OCBA

Stephanie Vardavas, Chair

**OR Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs**

Stephen Ying, Chair  
Mari Watanabe, Vice Chair  
Legislative Liaisons:  
Sen. Michael Dembrow  
Rep. Gene Whisnant

**OR Commission on Black Affairs**

James I. Manning Jr., Chair  
James Morris, Vice Chair  
Legislative Liaisons:  
Sen. Rod Monroe  
Rep. Lew Frederick

**OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs**

Alberto Moreno, Chair  
John Haroldson, Vice Chair  
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Sen. Chip Shields  
Rep. Jessica Vega Pederson

**OR Commission for Women**

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