



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 26, 2017

To: Representative Margaret Doherty, Chair  
House Committee on Education

Re: [HB 2657](#) Task Force on Out-of-School Youth, **Support**

The League of Women Voters believes that an equitable, quality public education is critical for students. The League supports policies and programs designed to: increase job opportunities and provide opportunities and/or incentives for basic or remedial education and job training.

Out-of-school youth who have disengaged from the usual K-12 progression to graduation have an extremely difficult time re-engaging in a traditional school system. Many of these youths have numerous adverse childhood experiences or ACES factors and live with ongoing family and financial crises. They would benefit from a perspective of encouraging high school completion, assistance in finding a pathway through CTE or workforce/WorkSource training to a career with a livable wage job. “The percentages of students not graduating on time disproportionately comprise students with disabilities, students of color, students navigating poverty, and male students.”

School districts are not incentivized to develop a graduation pathway for these youths because current methods of counting “graduation rates” have unintended consequences and barriers for students who have dropped out and now wish to complete an education to reenter without penalizing the school district “graduation rates” calculation. “The task force shall evaluate state policies and procedures that may have the unintended consequence of providing disincentives for school districts participating in reengagement efforts for out-of-school youth.”

LWVOR sees the Youth Development Division within DOE and the Youth Development Council (that oversees a unified system providing services to high-risk youth 16-24 years of age in a manner that supports educational success, focuses on crime prevention, and reduces high risk behaviors) as being a backbone to coordinate with regional and districts’ efforts for this Out of School Youth Task Force.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill  
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Chris Vogel in black ink.

Chris Vogel  
LWVOR Education Policy Coordinator