



From the Offices of Majority Leader Bowman, Minority Leader Elmer and Representative Ruiz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 10, 2026

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Oregon House Passes Statewide Dolly Parton Imagination Library to Deliver Free Books to Kids

SALEM, Ore. – Today, the House passed [HB 4022](#), establishing a statewide program to deliver free books each month to Oregon kids, helping families build early literacy skills and prepare kids for success in school and beyond.

The bill codifies the Oregon Dolly Parton Imagination Library into statute, which will provide a free, age-appropriate book every month to children from birth to age five at no cost to families. The program is designed to encourage a love of reading, improve school readiness and boost long-term academic outcomes for Oregon students.

“Oregon is choosing to be architects of the future. Together, we can eliminate the problem of kids growing up without books,” said **Majority Leader Ben Bowman** (D - Tigard). “Oregon is facing a literacy crisis. We can do better. With the expansion of the research-backed instruction and training, and this incredible public-private partnership, we are investing in Oregon’s youngest learners.”

“This bill ensures that all of Oregon’s eligible students can reap the benefits of learning while developing a love of reading. It is a simple, but powerful way to invest in our kids and set them up for success,” said **Minority Leader Lucetta Elmer**, (R - McMinnville).

Key provisions of the legislation include:

- Providing a free, high-quality book each month to eligible children from birth through age five.
- Expanding access to early literacy resources in every community across Oregon, regardless of location.

- Supporting improved school readiness, third-grade reading proficiency and long-term graduation rates.
- Establishing a dedicated account to fund the program through a mix of public and private support, with state funding limited to no more than 50 percent of total program costs in any fiscal year.

“As a child, I only had two physical books, both lovingly crafted by my mother. Those books meant everything to me,” said **Rep. Ricki Ruiz** (D - Gresham). “This bill is about making sure every child in Oregon has that same spark of possibility, but without scarcity. Early literacy shapes confidence, imagination, and lifelong learning. By putting books directly into the hands of our youngest kids, we’re investing not just in reading, but in their future.”

Fun fact: Dolly Parton has a song appreciating the state called [Eugene Oregon](#), written in the 1970s after she visited the city to play a show and received multiple standing ovations for fighting through her homesickness.

The bill now advances to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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