



## OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Ready to Read Program faces cuts under budget approved by Oregon House**

**Salem, Ore.** - In just the latest example of the consequences of lawmakers' failure to address structural spending reform, House Democrats today approved the budget for the State Library, which includes a 13.5% reduction to the state's Ready to Read grant program. House Republicans criticized Democrats for passing the budget, which comes amid record revenues, without first exhausting all options to reduce underlying cost drivers within state government.

"This budget is just the latest example of the consequences of our failure to prioritize cost containment solutions this session," said Representative Mike Nearman (R-Independence). "Our state's unsustainable spending patterns and rapidly increasing personnel obligations have meant that even in a record revenue year, programs like Ready to Read are getting left behind. We could prevent cuts to services if we were willing to rein in operating costs in other areas of our state budget."

The Ready to Read program provides financial support to local libraries operating early learning and summer reading programs. Under the budget approved by House Democrats today, the program will see a funding reduction of nearly \$200,000, or 13.5% of the program's overall budget.

According to the State Library's [annual report](#) on the program, 133 libraries received Ready to Read grants in 2016. The State Library also reported that more than 160,000 Oregonians participated in state-funded early literacy programs, with more than 250,000 Oregonians benefiting from state-funded summer reading initiatives.

"Budgets are choices. This Legislature has made the choice not to reform our structural spending obligations, and now we are beginning to understand the consequences of that choice in painful terms," concluded Rep. Nearman.

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