



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

REISSUED FOR RELEASE

*****Updated to correct chamber in bill number*****

February 25, 2026

Contact: Elizabeth Cronen, elizabeth.cronen@oregonlegislature.gov

Legislation Strengthens Oregon’s Literacy Partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

State Senate passes House Bill 4022 to make Oregon’s participation permanent

SALEM, OR – Evidence from all over the world shows that kids who have early access to books at home [do better at school](#). That benefit, along with the pure joy that springs from beautiful picture books, is the motivation behind Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Legislation passed in the Oregon Senate today puts our state one step closer to a permanent partnership with the music legend’s program, which sends a free, high-quality book every month to children from birth to age five.

“When a child’s love of reading is ignited, it opens a lifelong world of possibilities. By delivering free books to kids, the Oregon Dolly Parton Imagination Library is creating opportunities for thousands of young readers across our state,” said **Senator Deb Patterson (D – Salem)**. “This investment jumpstarts students’ early education and paves the way for later success.”

Oregon already participates in the Imagination Library program with state funding to the Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care. House Bill 4022 puts the partnership directly into state law and establishes a dedicated account to fund it. The legislation specifies a mix of public and private financial support for the program, with no more than 50 percent of funding coming from the state.

“Reading is powerful for child brain development and relationships,” said **Senator Lisa Reynolds, M.D. (D – Portland)**, a practicing pediatrician. “Literacy starts with newborns, and delivering books to the youngest Oregonians and their families creates wonderful opportunities for learning, connecting, and growing.”

“Oregon is choosing to be architects of the future. This achievement represents opportunities for families to share a story, spark imagination, and build early language and literacy skills,” said **House Majority Leader Ben Bowman (D – Tigard, Metzger & S. Beaverton)**. “Over time, these small, consistent interactions lay the groundwork for kindergarten readiness—and they help our youngest kids fall in love with reading.”

The measure passed in a vote of 27 to 1. It now goes to Governor Tina Kotek for her signature.

###