



**OREGON SENATE
REPUBLICANS**

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Contact: Caitie Butler

[\(503\) 986-1955](tel:5039861955)

[\(503\) 680-6944](tel:5036806944)

Senate Democrats Reject Bill to Create Scholarship Program for Low-Income Students and Students with Disabilities

Salem, OR - Today, Democrats in the Oregon Senate rejected a bill to provide educational opportunities for low-income and disabled Oregon students. SB 562 would have established the Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program to prevent vulnerable students from falling through the cracks.

"Many students and their parents find that a one-size-fits-all approach to their education doesn't work," said Senator Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer). "The Oregon Empowerment Scholarship Program recognizes that every child learns differently and allows students with unique needs, including low-income students and students with disabilities, to use private tutoring or attend an alternative school that enables them to reach their full potential."

The bill, sponsored by Senator Thatcher and Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend), awards Empowerment Scholarships to low-income, special needs or foster students to invest in tutoring, educational therapy, or private or alternative school that better suits an individual student's needs. It also enables them to establish a savings account for higher education. Each student can use up to 90% of their allocated state education funding for approved educational expenses.

"Not only do these Empowerment Scholarships help students with individualized needs achieve their highest potential now," explained Senator Knopp, "they also set students up with a college savings account they can use to pursue higher education opportunities and secure a family-wage job in the future."

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