LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a 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.

January 9, 2026

To: **Rep. Zach Hudson, Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Education**

Re: **HB 4149** – Education of Homeless Students – **Support**

HB 4149 requires school districts and the Oregon Dept. of Education (ODE) to help homeless students. The League of Women Voters believes every citizen should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all.

Currently, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act assures unhoused students of their right to a free, appropriate, public education, but that act is managed by the U.S. Department of Education, which has experienced severe staffing cuts recently.

According to ODE data reported in Oregonlive, in the 24-25 school year, 56% of the homeless student population in Oregon was chronically absent. According to the Oregon Statewide Report Card, 21,345 of the students in Oregon were homeless in that school year.

We appreciate the fact that the bill requires districts to designate a local liaison to remove barriers to education. An evaluation of New York City's Attendance Matters program which addresses educational barriers for homeless students in grades K-8, found the effort significantly improved attendance.

We urge your Support for HB 4149.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Barbara Klein
Acting President LWVOR

Jean Pierce
Action Chair