***TEMPLATE for Letter to Legislators: SB 5518***

Dear *YOUR SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVE NAME HERE*,

My name is *YOUR NAME HERE* and, as your constituent and a member/an ally *CHOOSE ONE* of the Oregon Library Association *(OPTIONAL:* and library employee at *YOUR LIBRARY NAME HERE)*, I am asking for your support of libraries. In particular, I call your attention to **SB 5518**.

**SB 5518** (“Relating to the financial administration of the State Library”) **is the State Library of Oregon budget bill**, which includes funding for the **Ready to Read grant program**. The purpose of Ready to Read grants – which are available to every eligible public library in Oregon – is to supplement local funding for summer reading and other literacy programs aimed at youth ages 0-17.

The current Ready to Read program **has proven successful**, with close to 300,000 children participating in Summer Reading Programs in 2018 and increased attendance at related library events. Last summer, a whopping 166,463 books (likely more!) were read by participating children. Of course, Summer Reading Programs are just one use of Ready to Read Funds. Last year, all 134 eligible public libraries applied for and received grants to support library services for youth. **In 2018, each $1 of state funds leveraged $1.88 in local funds.**

The public library is the only resource in most Oregon communities that offers literacy programs for every resident without regard to demographic characteristics. **Ready to Read grants are the only State General Fund program directly supporting Oregon’s public libraries**.

As a librarian and as your constituent, I urge you to **support SB 5518, which maintains the State Library’s budget, including Ready to Read grants at their current level of $1,465,695 or $1.02 per child**. Your support would enable public libraries to continue helping children develop successful literacy skills and achieve a love of reading.

Thank you for your time and your support of Oregon’s libraries.

Regards,

*YOUR NAME HERE*