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## NEWS RELEASE

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March 31, 2011

### SENATE APPROVES MEASURE REMOVING 'MENTAL RETARDATION' FROM STATUTES

(SALEM) -- A measure that will end the offensive statutory practice in Oregon public schools of labeling some students with low IQ scores as “mentally retarded” passed the Oregon Senate on a 30-0 vote Thursday.

Senate Bill 3 is known as Katey’s law in honor of 16-year-old Katey Crawford of Tualatin whose parents had to accept having Katey labeled as “mentally retarded” in order to have her educated with an “individual education plan” designed to address her specific needs.

“No child in our state should ever be referred to as mentally retarded. We are better than that. Oregon is better than that,” said Senate President Peter Courtney, sponsor of the measure. “I have great respect for Katey and her parents and their courage to fight for all Oregon children with intellectual disabilities.”

#### Senate Bill 3:

- Modifies education statutes to replace the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability;”
- Prohibits individualized education programs from using the words “retardation” or “mental retardation” to refer to a child with an intellectual disability.
- And allows, Legislative Counsel to substitute “intellectual disability” for words designating “retardation” or “mental retardation” wherever they occur in ORS chapters 326 to 353.

“As parents, we teach our children many different lessons, and being respectful of others is just one of them” said Senator Chris Edwards (D-Eugene), co-sponsor of the measure. “Words matter

and the word retarded is not only offensive, but a close-minded label that fails to recognize the differences in those who are disabled. It is time that our laws recognize the impact profane and inconsiderate words can have on individuals and their families.”

The new law mirrors the federal statute known as “Rosa’s Law,” which was signed by President Obama in 2010 and brings Oregon statutes on the issue into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“Words matter. How we talk about our children can have a serious effect on the way they view themselves and on their self-esteem,” said Senator Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “It is important that our state statutes reflect our collective values and I’m proud of the Senate today for passing this bill.”