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To Whom It May Concern:

I have been an Oregon resident for 31 years. I am also a Handicapped Learner Specialist with an Oregon Standard Teaching Certificate. I teach reading to children with severe learning and behavioral problems as well as reading and journalism to average and gifted students.

As an educator with many years experience in my field, I am writing to express my support for Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in his petition to remain in this country as a resident.

I have read some of Bhagwan's books and listened to many of his discourses on tape. I feel that Bhagwan's insights into human nature are a valuable contribution to all people working in the area of the Behavioral Sciences.

Specifically, Bhagwan has helped me to have a different attitude toward the nature of work. This includes the work I do, the work my students do and work in general. Since being exposed to Bhagwan's philosophies, I tend to be more "present" in my teaching, giving myself more totally to the job at hand. I feel that this attitude is also reflected in my students who respond to the extra attention and also to my increased respect for their innate capabilities.

By this I do not mean that I promote any specific "religious" teaching in the classroom. Instead I have a higher vision of my own potential and my students potential. I have a commitment to freedom of religion and to the separation of Church and State. In fact Bhagwan's vision of every person as completely free has given me a reminder that my students must learn to make decisions for themselves. These decisions about their lives should not be imposed on them by me or others.

Many students I work with have negative self images based on years of failure in our schools. Recent surveys have also shown that a majority of our jail and prison population are people who experienced reading problems in school. I feel that if more people could feel their own power and potential as free human beings that this confidence would reflect in their learning abilities. I feel that Bhagwan's insights in this area would be valuable to all educators:

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has valuable contributions for our culture, because he shows people that they can uncover many talents of which they were not even aware. He also teaches the joy of working and living totally. I feel that his presence in this country as well as the inspired work of his students and disciples could be of great benefit to all of us.

Thank you for your attention.
Sincerely,

Margaret Brody Strauss

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