



May 7, 2021

Co-Chair Fred Girod, Co-Chair Paul Holvey

Joint Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Capital Construction

RE: SB 5534, Support for Washington County Family Peace Center capital construction request

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

As legislators representing Washington County, we write to share our support for funding for the Washington County Family Peace Center project. Strengthening our response to child and family trauma is critical to the well-being of our Washington County communities.

Since 1987, CARES Northwest has been serving Washington County children at their Northeast Portland location. In 2018, for the first time in 30 years, CARES Northwest served more Washington County children than Multnomah County children, and that trend has continued. In response, Washington County leaders and community members have been working to bring CARES Northwest to Washington County in a location shared with the Family Justice Center. By co-locating those services, families who experience any type of violence within the home can receive the support they need at one location.

The Washington County Family Peace Center project seeks to establish a 20,000+ square foot facility for Washington County children and families impacted by child abuse, neglect and domestic violence. This facility would provide medical treatment, therapy, family support and prevention services to address trauma in a collaborative, proactive way while promoting the health and safety of our community. The project follows a national model and will be the first co-located center for child abuse and domestic violence in Oregon.

Co-locating services for both child abuse and domestic violence addresses an urgent need in Washington County. We know that child abuse and domestic violence are widespread and cause long-lasting social and economic harm, not only to the victims individually but also to the community as a whole.

Additionally, while this trauma impacts everyone, it often can have a disproportionate impact on those who are financially vulnerable or historically marginalized. COVID-19 has exacerbated these challenges due to reduced access to help and resources for children and families.

We request your support for funding for the Washington County Family Peace Center project, which is estimated to cost about \$6 million for the purchase of the building and renovations. This investment in the most vulnerable members of our community will not only promote the health and safety of children and families today, but the well-being of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Senator Kim Thatcher-SD 13

Senator Kate Lieber-SD 14

Senator Chuck Riley-SD 15

Senator Ginny Burdick-SD 18

Representative Courtney Neron-HD 26

Representative Sheri Schouten-HD 27

Representative Susan McLain-HD 29

Representative Janeen Sollman-HD 30

Representative Suzanne Weber-HD 32

Representative Maxine Dexter-HD 33

Representative Rachel Prusak-HD 37