



Child Care That Works. For Every Family.

To: House Early Childhood and Human Services

From: Child Care for Oregon Coalition

Date: February 27, 2025

Re: In Support of House Bill 3560 - By Right Zoning for Child Care Centers in Residential Areas

Chair Hartman, Vice - Chairs Scharf and Nguyen, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Delina Biniam, and I am the Advocacy Manager for Family Forward and a Child Care for Oregon Coalition member. Our coalition, which is made up of non-profit organizations, unions, community advocates, parents, and providers working together to build a comprehensive child care system in the state of Oregon, strongly urges your support of House Bill 3560.

Our entire economy is dependent on equitable access to child care. Like roads and bridges, affordable, high-quality child care is necessary infrastructure. Parents need affordable child care that provides a peace of mind that their children are learning and loved. Employers need their employees to have access to reliable, affordable child care so they can return to work. And our future workforce demands must ensure that all children have access to child care environments that stimulate development and get kids ready to learn in K-12.

We've seen the impacts of how the lack of investment and infrastructure in these critical systems has led to massive economic inequality for the disproportionately women of color who work in this field, and the long-term negative impacts we've seen on women's workforce participation and economic security. While our state has made significant strides in the last few years in addressing the child care crisis, we still have much work to do. One of the areas demanding urgent attention is the lack of suitable physical infrastructure for early learning and child care.

However, despite its importance, Oregon faces a severe shortage of child care options. There are significant barriers for people to open and run child care centers to address the child care desert issue. The current regulatory framework governing child care centers across multiple uncoordinated regulatory entities is expensive and burdensome, making it difficult for providers to open and maintain high-quality programs. The result is a shortage of affordable child care options for working families, who are forced to bear

the brunt of these costs. This perpetuates the cycle of poverty and inequality. To address this pressing issue, we must focus on three key areas: workable physical locations, skilled workforce development, and operating subsidies.

HB 3560 addresses this issue head-on by creating by-right zoning for child care centers in residential zones when co-located with another community use or apartment complex. This simple yet effective solution will save eligible child care providers from months of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and costs exceeding \$20,000.

By supporting HB 3560, we allow child care centers to operate in more locations; we can increase access to affordable care, reduce facility waitlists, and support the economic mobility of working families. Our coalition believes that every child deserves a safe, nurturing environment that fosters their development and prepares them for success in school and beyond.

We urge you to pass HB 3560 and take a critical step towards addressing Oregon's child care crisis. We believe this legislation will positively impact our state's children, families, and economy, and we look forward to working with you to ensure its passage.

Thank you,

*Selina Biniam*

Child Care for Oregon Coalition



Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children

