



March 10, 2021

House Committee on Early Childhood
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Power, Vice Chairs Reynolds and Zika, and Committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 3109: Regarding Child Care Facilities. On behalf of the Bend Chamber's 1,500 business members we thank Representative Zika for bringing the bill forward this session to support our local community.

Access to quality, affordable child care is one of the strategic goals of the Bend Chamber's advocacy program. As you heard in committee today, the Chamber helped to develop and fund the Child Care Accelerator Program to address the child care desert which exists in Central Oregon. The child care industry has been devastated as a result of COVID. Prior to the pandemic there was only one available opening for every three children in Central Oregon. It is much, much worse today with many child care providers unable to weather the economic turmoil.

The bill proposes a reasonable and thoughtful solution to reduce the regulatory and cost burden for child care providers and those looking to enter the market. Allowing childcare to be located close to where people work is essential to employees with families and helps businesses attract and retain talent. Increasing available locations in commercial and industrial zoned areas, as outlined in the bill, will help providers to find more options to meet the growing needs of families to find quality childcare.

We appreciate the spirit of the proposed amendment discussed today to remove entities that are already regulated in statute, and will strongly support the amended bill and encourage passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony and we respectfully ask for a yes vote.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks". To the right of the signature is a vertical line.

Katy Brooks
President + CEO
Bend Chamber of Commerce
Member of Early Childhood Leadership Commission

Creating an environment where businesses, their employees and our community excel together through collaboration, advocacy, resources and leadership to meet Bend's business challenges.