

Monday, January 23, 2023

RE: Support for Expanding Early Childhood Facilities (HB 3005, HB 2727)

Distinguished Legislators,

Investments in early childhood are critical to support early brain development, health and wellbeing of children, families, and communities, and the broader economic wellbeing of our state. Oregon has made progress supporting families so children can reach their full potential. This progress reflects a promise to build a strong early learning and care system that is aligned and connected across partner agencies.

2023 brings an opportunity for Oregon legislators to keep their promise to children and families. Keeping this promise means acting on policies and investments built with and for families most impacted by systemic inequities to strengthen the quality of programs and services, and ensure every child and family has what they need. Supporting children and families and strengthening child care is also integral to Oregon's economy.

Building on recent momentum requires action this session to expand early childhood facilities infrastructure, create accessible workforce pathways, strengthen behavioral health, and reach more children and families with quality early learning and care.

The Early Childhood Coalition supports these bills to expand early childhood facilities infrastructure:

- **Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund (HB 3005)** Create an early learning and care facilities fund to expand quality, culturally relevant programs in Oregon.
- **Child Care Zoning and Building Code Study and Recommendations (HB 2727)** Conduct a review of five local government zoning, land use, and building code requirements; and their impact on early learning and care facilities in homes and centers, including disproportionate impacts. Make recommendations for change.

Child care and preschool facilities are essential community infrastructure. Our entire economy is dependent on equitable access to child care and preschool. Like roads and bridges, affordable, quality early learning and care is necessary infrastructure. Parents need care that provides a peace of mind that their children are learning and loved. Employers need their employees to have access to reliable, affordable care so they can work. Children need care that supports their well-being and the development of their brains and bodies to build a strong foundation that supports life-long outcomes. Passing these bills are critical to building the infrastructure Oregon's economy and children need.

Sincerely,

Adelante Mujeres
Albina Head Start
Alliance for Equity in Montessori Education
Children's Institute
Coalition of Communities of Color
FACT Oregon
Family Forward Oregon
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
Foundations for a Better Oregon
Happy Go Lucky Child Care
Healthy Families Oregon Coalition
Latino Network
Metropolitan Family Service
Multnomah County

Nurse-Family Partnership
Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children
Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries
Oregon Child Care Association
Oregon Early Learning Hub Association
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Head Start Association
Oregon Montessori Association
Oregon Public Health Institute
Our Children Oregon
Reach Out & Read
Right From the Start
ReadyNation

