



EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO : Co-Chair Senator Aaron Woods
Co-Chair Representative David Gomberg
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means –
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

FROM : Sue Miller, Chair, Early Learning Council

DATE : March 2, 2023

RE : Testimony supporting proposed budget for Oregon Housing and Community Services in SB 5511

SUE MILLER
Chair

ANDREA BELL
*Executive Director,
Oregon Housing and
Community Services*

ANGELA BLACKWELL

KATY BROOKS

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*Deputy Director, Oregon
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Services*

Staff
Remy Watts, *Early
Learning Council
Administrator*

The Early Learning Council is committed to addressing the root causes of inequities in the early care and education sector. Hence, we support the innovative initiative in this budget to address the significant needs for both affordable housing and early childhood programs by co-locating them in future projects.

The Legislature has *charged* the Early Learning Council with coordinating a unified and aligned system of early learning grounded in the science of child development and equity to assure that our young children enter school ready to learn and that all families are healthy, stable and attached. With significant public input, the Council developed a five-year early learning system strategic plan [Raise Up Oregon](#) in 2019, and we are in the process of updating it as we speak.

A unique feature of our strategic plan and the Early Learning Council is our work across multiple state agencies with six agency directors serving as ex officio members of the Council: the Department of Education, the Health Authority, the Department of Human Services, the Housing and Community Services Agency, Higher Education Coordinating Council, and the Early Learning Division/Department of Early Learning and Care.

The Early Learning Council embraces an early childhood focus—prenatal to age five—with each of our partner agencies. We are particularly excited about the initiative to address the intertwined needs of child care and affordable housing for Oregonians with young children that is represented in this \$5 million budget request. Both housing and child care are essential for our economy, in both the short- and long-term, and contribute to child and family wellbeing.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Early Learning Council's support for investment in co-location of child care and affordable housing.