



Parrott Creek
Child & Family Services
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March 20, 2020

Co-Chairs Paul Holvey and Arnie Roblan
Joint Committee on Coronavirus Response
Oregon Legislature
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Co-Chairs,

I would like to urge you to support recommendations by the Oregon Alliance (Safe Kids, Healthy Families, Strong Communities) to ensure that our children's system of care for at-risk and vulnerable children survives the current economic and health crisis.

My concerns are around the services and supports needed for the next most vulnerable members of our communities after the elderly: children in the child welfare system and parents struggling with addiction, homelessness and extreme poverty.

Parrott Creek works with these populations every day, providing community care and 24/7 residential care to 800 children and families each year. Our service users all come from impoverished backgrounds, are eligible for Free School Meals and many other related benefits, have horribly high ACE scores, high levels of trauma and many underlying/pre-existing conditions. Sadly, nearly all have poor histories of health care access.

We are facing a crisis with staff concerns, workforce challenges, and a potential financial catastrophe.

We urge you to allocate direct emergency funding to children's system providers to allow us to stabilize our workforce, hire temporary employees if needed, purchase critical PPE, infection control supplies, etc.

It is imperative that we, collectively, don't let this sector collapse. It is already a sector that is under-resourced and lacks any spare capacity and the pressure on it is becoming extreme. If more than a few residential providers close their doors there will not be beds for them in Oregon and sending children or families out of state will be even worse. Keeping the sector as healthy as possible and able to respond to the needs of vulnerable children will be critical both now AND into the future when we try to get life back to normal

Sincerely,

Simon Fulford
Executive Director