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VIA EMAIL

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Re: COVID-19 - Financial Support Needed for Vulnerable Youth

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Arnie Roblan and Legislator Paul Holvey and Members of the Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response:

As a member of the Board of Janus Youth Programs, that has served vulnerable children, youth and families for 47 years, I urge you to immediately allocate \$5,000,000 towards the creation of a fund that would make available \$125,000 to each of Oregon's service providers working with our state's children and families.

The impact of Coronavirus on agencies like Janus Youth Programs is having a devastating impact on our front-line staff who are working around the clock to keep youth safe. This immediate infusion of cash will enable us to:

- Retain and maintain our staffing ratios to ensure safety and compliance with state and federal requirements.
- Temporarily pay staff who may not have the resources to be off without pay, and/or may have already used their Oregon Sick Leave and/or still may need to remain home.
- Hire additional staff or incentivize staff to come to work to ensure safety and consistency with the children and youth in our programs.
- Fund additional costs such as transportation due to school closures, food and other basic needs supplies.

Additionally, we ask you to support:

- Allocating \$275,000 to purchase the necessary personal protective safety equipment (gloves, masks, etc.) and supplies (especially safety, hygiene and infection control products) with priority given to residential and shelter programs which have 24/7 needs (Janus operates 9 such programs).
- Approve HB4039 from the 2020 short session, providing critical assistance to keep Runaway Homeless Youth shelters open and operating, with an emergency clause to get the funding on the street immediately (Janus operates 3 such programs).

- Approve the \$5 million BRS rate investment approved by the Ways and Means Committee this year, which will serve as an emergency lifeline to allow providers to retain their critical workers during this economic crisis, and keep the doors open to the state's most vulnerable children (Janus operates 5 such programs).
- Language to require DHS, OHA, OYA, OHCS and county and local governments to work with providers to access space in case there is a need for quarantine or if a program must close for youth who are unaffiliated with OYA or CW. Direction that state funds can be used to pay for this emergency space for this purpose.
- Language directing CCOs, through their reserves, and both OYA and DHS to ensure full contract revenue if a program is required to reduce capacity or temporarily close.

Thank you for your support of organizations like Janus Youth Programs who are serving hundreds of high needs and vulnerable youth at one of the most critical times in in our State's and nation's history.

Sincerely,



Amy Joseph Pedersen