

GOOD AFTERNOON, CO-CHAIRS GILLIAM AND TOMEI AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. FOR THE RECORD MY NAME IS BILL DAVIDSON. I AM A CITIZEN VOLUNTEER FROM DESCHUTES COUNTY. I AM CHAIR OF THE DESCHUTES COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION. BUT, TODAY I AM SPEAKING TO YOU FROM MY POSITION AS CHAIR OF THE COALITION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY COMMISSIONS.

SINCE THE GOVERNOR'S INTRODUCTION OF HIS EARLY LEARNING PROPOSITION THE COALITION HAS DILIGENTLY WORKED AT UNDERSTANDING THE BREATH AND DEPTH OF THE PROPOSAL. WE ARE DEDICATED TO ENSURING THAT OREGON'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE AFFORDED THE BEST POSSIBLE PROGRAMS THAT WILL LEAD TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND SUCCESS OF EVERY CHILD AND FAMILY. WITH THAT IN MIND WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNOR'S INITIATIVE AND TO ENSURE THAT DURING THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROPOSAL THERE IS A SEAMLESS TRANSITION FROM CURRENT PRACTICE TO THE EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM. COALITION MEMBERS HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE AND THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL TRYING TO CONTRIBUTE AND HELP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLID BILL THAT WILL MAKE THIS INITIATIVE A REALITY. MY COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE COALITION THIS AFTERNOON ARE IN REFERENCE TO THIS IMPORTANT LEGISLATION BEFORE YOU, HOUSE BILL 4165.

IT IS CRUCIAL WE ALL RECOGNIZE THE STAKES ARE HIGH. WHAT IS PROPOSED WILL ELIMINATE A 30 YEAR STATE-COUNTY PARTNERSHIP IN COUNTY BASED COMMISSIONS, SUCH AS THE LOCAL COMMISSION I CHAIR IN DESCHUTES COUNTY. LOCAL COMMISSIONS THOUGHOUT THE STATE OVERSEE LOCAL SYSTEMS OF SERVICES AND SUPPORTS PROVIDING FOR IMPORTANT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO AGE 18, AS WELL AS FOR THEIR FAMILIES.

THE MEMBERS OF THE COALITION WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO ACT CAREFULLY AND THOUGHTFULLY OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND WEEKS TO ENSURE AN APPROPRIATE TRANSITION THAT DOES NOT UNINTENTIONALLY HARM CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. ALL OF US NEED TO GET THE NEXT STEPS RIGHT SO WE DON'T HAVE TO RE-DO ACTIONS IN THE 2013 LEGISLATIVE SESSION.

LET ME ADD THAT COALITION MEMBERS APPRECIATE THE ABILITY TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ON THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

ISSUES, AND PARTICULARLY WITH MR. DUKE SHEPARD WHO HAS BEEN AVAILABLE FOR CONVERSATIONS WITH US ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS.

WE WOULD SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO HOUSE BILL 4165:

1. THE COALITION APPRECIATES THE ASSURANCE THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE IS SUBMITTING AN AMENDMENT DELAYING THE ELIMINATION OF LOCAL COMMISSIONS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES UNTIL JUNE 30, 2013. THIS IS A DELAY, NOT FOR CONVENIENCE, BUT RATHER TO ASSURE THAT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WHO DEPEND ON SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THEM DURING THE TRANSITION.

2. THE COALITION APPRECIATES THE ASSURANCE THAT THE AMENDMENT WILL INCLUDE LANGUAGE SPECIFYING THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP WITH OREGON COUNTIES -- WE KNOW THIS INCLUSION IS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COUNTIES.

3. WE SUGGEST THE AGE SPAN FOR WHICH THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL SHOULD HAVE RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT ZERO TO SIX BUT RATHER PRE-NATAL TO SIX.

4. THE COALITION SUPPORTS LANGUAGE THAT WILL DELAY AN RFP PROCESS SO THAT "ACCOUNTABILITY HUBS" REFERRED TO AS "COMMUNITY-BASED COORDINATORS OF EARLY LEARNING SERVICES" WILL NOT BEGIN FUNCTIONING UNTIL JULY 1, 2013. DELAYING THE TIMING OF THESE "HUBS" WILL HELP TO ENSURE THESE "HUBS" HAVE TIME TO COALESCE THROUGHOUT THE STATE AND PREPARE FOR THE RFP PROCESS. THE COALITION ENCOURAGES THAT PREFERENCE BE GIVEN TO THOSE RFP SUBMISSIONS THAT DOCUMENT WELL ESTABLISHED COLLABORATION AND REQUIRE ENTITIES TO WORK TOGETHER TO FORM PARTNERSHIPS RATHER THAN CREATE A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

5. WE BELIEVE SECTIONS OF HOUSE BILL 4165 DEALING WITH THE PROPOSED YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL NEED TO BE STRENGTHENED BY PROVIDING THE COUNCIL WITH A DIRECTOR (THE RESOURCES FOR THIS POSITION COULD COME FROM THE CURRENT STATE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES POSITIONS THAT ARE TRANSFERRED TO THE EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL), BY CREATING A FUND FOR THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PARALLEL TO THE

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL FUND AND BY CLARIFYING EITHER IN HB 4165 OR IN THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE THAT YOUTH INVESTMENT FUNDING, AS WELL AS JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION FUNDING, BE ALLOCATED TO THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL. RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH FUNDING SHOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED UNDER THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL RATHER THAN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES. RUNNING AWAY AND HOMELESSNESS OFTEN LEAD TO POOR OR NO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY. FURTHERMORE, THE PRIORITY OR FOCUS FOR THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL NEEDS TO BE ON SUPPORTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND ADDRESSING THE CAUSES OF DELINQUENCY OR CRIMINOGENIC DOMAINS SUPPORTED BY RESEARCH SUCH AS POOR FAMILY FUNCTIONING, NEGATIVE PEER ASSOCIATION AND THE LIKE. BY PRIORITIZING THESE FACTORS, THE CORE CAUSES OF RISK TAKING BEHAVIOR INCLUDING GANG VIOLENCE AND INVOLVEMENT WILL BE ADDRESSED.

6. FINALLY, THE COALITION QUESTIONS THE TIMING FOR REPEAL OF VARIOUS STATUTES DEALING WITH THE LOCAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSIONS. IF LOCAL COMMISSIONS WILL REMAIN IN PLACE FOR ANOTHER YEAR, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2013, WE SUGGEST THAT REPEALING ALL OF THE LOCAL COMMISSION STATUTES COULD BE HANDLED IN THE 2013 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WHEN YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES WILL BE ABLE TO REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FROM THE EARLY LEARNING AND THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS BEFORE FINALIZING THIS REPEAL DATE. THESE OPERATING PLANS WILL NEED TO ENSURE THAT COST-EFFECTIVE, COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES WILL BE CONTINUED BOTH FOR CHILDREN PRE-NATAL TO SIX AND FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SIX TO TWENTY ALONG WITH THEIR FAMILIES.

IF, HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD CHOOSE NOT TO WAIT UNTIL 2013 TO MAKE THIS CRITICAL DECISION, THEN THE COALITION SUPPORTS THE ASSURANCE THAT LANGUAGE PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE WILL SET THE EFFECTIVE DATE FOR REPEAL OF LOCAL COMMISSION STATUTES AT JUNE 30, 2013.

THANK FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, I WILL BE PLEASED TO TRY TO ANSWER THEM.