



## OREGON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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MEASURE: HB 4165  
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SUBMITTED BY: Duke Shepard

The Honorable Co-Chair Rep. Carolyn Tomei

The Honorable Co-Chair Rep. Vic Gilliam

House Human Services Committee

Dear Co-Chairs Gilliam and Tomei;

The Oregon Business Association strongly supports the Governor's efforts to reshape Oregon's fractured system of investments in Early Childhood Education and Care.

House Bill 4165 is an important step forward in turning around Oregon's long term prospects.

Our members are focused on growing a strong economy in Oregon, which we know is dependent upon quality education. We know that the fiscal situation of the state over the long term will not change unless we invest differently at the front end.

Substantial brain research in the last decade has only reinforced what we already know – the early years are when the brain develops, and how the brain develops is perhaps the key determinant in the obstacles or opportunities a child will face in school and in life.

No government spending will have a bigger return on investment than investing in Early Learning. Preparing children for kindergarten and ensuring that their families have the assets to succeed will make the K-12 experience more successful for the child, the family, and the school.

The business and philanthropic communities invest substantial funds in programs in communities across Oregon related to Early Learning. That investment could be leveraged better if the state were to develop a more outcome focused, intentional system for its own investments.

Research shows that for every dollar invested today, savings range from \$2.50 to as much as \$17 over time. Arthur J. Rolnick, then-senior vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, and Robert Grunewald, associate economist, calculated an annual, inflation-adjusted rate of return of 16% for high-quality prekindergarten for disadvantaged three- and four- year olds.

HB 4165 puts Early Learning at the top of Oregon's agenda for the future, and focuses attention toward improving the outcomes for children and families to deliver better results for the dollars Oregon already spends. The OBA wholeheartedly supports this effort.

Sincerely,

Ryan Deckert, President