

**Testimony of Commissioner Tootie Smith, Clackamas County
Regarding HB 2013
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
March 11, 2013**

Chair Tomei and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Clackamas County to discuss House Bill 2013. My name is Tootie Smith and I am a Clackamas County Commissioner. It is a pleasure to see you again, Chair Tomei. We served together as state legislators just over a decade ago. Thank you for your service to Clackamas County and to Oregon.

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners has identified the smooth transition of services from local commissions on children and families to Early Learning Councils as a key legislative priority.

For more than a year Clackamas County has worked to implement the Governor's early learning reforms. During that time, County staff has worked to merge multiple existing Early Childhood Committees to better integrate efforts among many community stakeholders including schools, the Department of Human Services and numerous providers.

Clackamas County's work related to HUB development includes four components:

- ***First: Family Resource Coordination and Access to Services for High Risk Families***

As one of three pilot programs authorized last session, the local department of human services has partnered with the County to divert families from further involvement into the foster care system. Using a family navigation model, Family Resource Coordinators have been focusing on transitioning services between early childhood providers and kindergarten for high risk -children.

- ***Second: Information and Referral***

The County created a single telephone number for new moms to access a variety of services. Previously, moms had to figure out how to get to the "right door" on their own. The County also developed the Family Education Support Network website to enhance linkages and provide useful information.

- ***Third: Comprehensive Inventory***

The County has been working on assessing and inventorying services to identify the target populations being served, and existing support services throughout the County.

- ***Fourth: Leadership Advisory Committee***

In addition to the extensive community network staff, the County has convened a local leadership advisory committee to design and form an early learning services system. Membership of this Committee includes parents, human services staff, educators, and representatives from mental health and addictions, public health, head start, migrant head start, community corrections, the relief nursery and healthy start.

This committee is working to re-purpose any funds that come through a transition plan, agree on common outcomes, streamline processes, and look for existing or new funding opportunities. With membership from the Coordinated Care Organization, partners are already looking for ways to coordinate and maximize physical health and mental health care with other support services.

Clackamas County believes that our work to date demonstrates that the County is committed to and capable of improving the results for at-risk children, including the ability to identify, evaluate and implement coordinated strategies to ensure that a child is ready to succeed in school.

I now introduce Cindy Becker, the Clackamas County Director of Health, Housing, and Human Services, to talk about concerns and questions as we move forward.