LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
O F   O R E G O N

February 18, 2015

House Health Care Committee
Representative Mitch Greenlik, Chair
Representative Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair
Representative Rob Nosse, Vice-Chair
sandy.thielecirka@state.or.us

Re: HB 2297 – Task Force for Prevention - Comments

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The League has a national position on Early Intervention for Children at Risk, which states that the League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children.

The League has supported the prevention programs for children in the past. More recently the League has observed the Early Learning Council and Department work to implement research based prevention programs for children 0-6. The Early Learning Department has a requirement to work with other agencies to coordinate children's programs. Most recently we have observed that the OHA Mental Health Division has explored research based prevention and treatment programs for children. Both of these agencies would be on the proposed Task Force, but they are already required to work together.

Much of the work described in this bill will be performed by these state agencies, and much of this work is already in progress. Our concerns are the most efficient use of state staff resources to implement prevention programs since a Task Force could consume considerable staff time. Our other concern is the use of budget resources for the administrative tasks rather than direct service programs. The outcomes will only improve with direct service programs, which are not fully funded at this point.

The League supports the intent of the Task Force but has reservations about the cost in budget and staff time. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Robin Wisdom   Karen Nibler
President LWVOR   Social Policy Coordinator