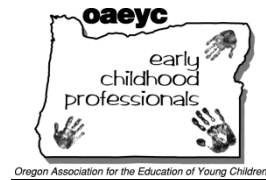


OREGON ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

An affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

5427 Glen Echo Ave Ste A, Gladstone, OR 97027



March 10, 2015

Co-Chair Betty Komp and Co-Chair Rod Monroe, and Members of the Committee
Way & Means Sub-Committee on Education

Regarding: HB 5016

The Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children (OAEYC) is a statewide organization with over 900 members who work with children from birth through age 8 and their families in a variety of settings including child care centers, family child care, Head Start, part day preschools, kindergarten and primary classrooms as well as high school, college and university early childhood programs. We are committed to both the well-being of young children and the on-going professional development of our members.

OAEYC supports the Budget for the Early Learning Division included in HB 5016. The Early Learning Division under the leadership of the Early Learning Council and Acting Director, Megan Irwin has made progress in bringing together a diverse and at times siloed array of services for young children and families. Important efforts are underway with early reading initiatives, coordinated professional development, and the Quality Rating and Improvement System for licensed child care programs. It is important to sustain those efforts in the next biennium.

OregonAEYC support efforts to enhance coordination of services and to increase developmentally appropriate services to those who do not currently have access including many low-income children, children of color and those who come from other cultures. It is particularly important that those services must be both developmentally and culturally appropriate to best meet the needs of children and families. Too many of Oregon's youngest children still do not have access to services.

Expansion of Home Visiting programs including regular developmental screening, increased resources for high quality preschool, and increased funding for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education services are all needed. While I cannot be with you today as I am in Washington, DC, encouraging our Congressional delegation to supply adequate federal funding, I urge you to provide Oregon's share for these programs.

Oregon's youngest children deserve our best efforts to give them an equitable start. If we are to break the cycle of poverty, we must engage in research proven efforts that start in the early years.

I thank you for your consideration of HB 5016.

Sincerely,
Merrily Haas
Executive Director

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OregonAEYC advocates for high quality care and education for every young child and strives to meet the professional needs and interests of the diverse early childhood community. Our vision is to build and maintain a strong, diverse, and inclusive organization that enables OAEYC to achieve our mission on behalf of children, families, and professionals in early childhood education.