



# Oregon

## Department of Human Services

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SB 213: Early Learning Hubs

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

Chair Sara Gelser, Vice Chair Kruse and Members of the Committee,



For the record, I am Maurita Johnson, District 15 Manager for DHS Child Welfare and Self Sufficiency Programs, covering Clackamas County. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 213, which if passed, will make the Early Learning Hubs permanent. Additionally, if passed, SB 213 will continue the work local communities have undertaken to align early learning systems, support thriving families, and ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten.

We know that a child's brain develops more in the first five years than at any other time in their life. It is important for children to have a strong foundation for success from day one; allowing children to grow and thrive. It is important to provide a proactive support to families to help prevent families from a future involvement with high cost services; both from a fiscal perspective, as well as a social justice perspective. This means a continued focus on children before they enter the school doors; and most importantly, effective collaboration between social services in our local areas so we can interdependently meet the needs of our early learning population.

Although the Clackamas Early Learning Hub continues to develop, we know it is our responsibility as an interdependent community to ensure that the experiences a child has during their early years will create a strong foundation for future success. As we strengthen our partnerships across K-12 schools, early education, health, human services and business, we know it will yield a supportive environment to young children and their families in the Clackamas region, and lead to more effective and efficient services.

Strengthening early learning through the Early Learning Hubs will benefit children, families, and continue to help streamline services to children in Clackamas County. As a member of the Clackamas Early Learning Hub, I urge your support of SB 213.

Thank you for your time,

Maurita Johnson, MSW  
District 15 Manager, Child Welfare and Self Sufficiency Programs  
Oregon Department of Human Services

