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February 23, 2017

TO: The Honorable Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Services

FROM: Cate Wilcox, Manager
Maternal and Child Health Section
Center for Prevention and Health Promotion
Public Health Division
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SUBJECT: Request to Apply-Competitive Grant – Support for Expectant and Parenting Teens, Women, Fathers and Their Families, OHA-PHD-17-03

Co-Chairs Steiner Hayward and Rayfield, and members of the committee, I am Cate Wilcox, the Maternal and Child Health Section Manager for the Oregon Health Authority.

I am here today to request permission to apply for the for the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health *Support for Expectant and Parenting Teens, Women, Fathers and Their Families* grant. This grant will begin July 1, 2017 and provide up to \$1,500,000 of federal funds per year for 3 years, ending June 30, 2020, for a total of up to \$4,500,000. Twenty grants will be awarded nationwide.

The goal of the grant is to collaborate with institutions of higher education to provide expectant and parenting teens, women, fathers, and their families with a seamless network of supportive services including evidence-based/evidence-informed approaches to improve their health and well-being. This grant funding requires no state matching funds. There is no federal requirement for maintenance of effort.

Expectant and parenting teens and young adults tend to be marginalized with poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, and less economic participation. Some groups have added layers of vulnerabilities such as lack of access to traditional support systems in health and education as well as stigmatization and isolation. Expectant and parenting teens and young adults are confronted with a host of simultaneous risk factors such as educational underachievement and school dropout, depression, inadequate prenatal and postpartum care, food insecurity, and subsequent low birth weight babies and poor child health outcomes. All of these factors affect the health of the pregnancy, the students and their children and limits their ability to thrive and become independent.

OHA proposes to focus on the community college student population. Community Colleges serve expectant and parenting teens and young adults, ages 16-24 years old more than other educational institutions, and the students tend to be lower income. Nationally 30% of community college students are parents. Students with children are especially unlikely to complete a certificate or degree within six years of enrollment, with only 33 % attaining a degree or certificate in that time. Seventy-one percent of all student parents are women. They face significant time demands, with 56% of single parents devoting more than 30 hours per week to dependent care, and often have significant financial challenges and graduate with more debt. While it is within the mission of the community college system to provide social services and employment assistance to their students, they are increasingly short on resources to develop a comprehensive system to fulfill this mission.

An enhanced system of supportive services for these students would not only improve the health outcomes of expectant and parenting population, but also educational, social, and economic outcomes that shape health. The vision is to create an enabling environment for this student population to continue their education, empower them with relevant knowledge and skills to be productive adults and effective parents; provide and link them to services to ensure they are healthy and making informed decisions about their health; and support them in making successful and healthy transitions into adulthood and the labor market.

OHA proposes supporting 4-6 community colleges in Oregon to enhance their system of services for this population that includes evidenced based/evidence informed approaches to improve health and well-being of this student population. OHA will conduct a needs and resources assessment to better understand the strengths and gaps of services across five core service areas: 1. Personal health, 2.

Child health, 3. Independence/education/employment, 4. Concrete supports (transportation and housing), and 5. Parenting supports. A Request for Proposal (RFP) process will determine which community college sites will be funded. In addition, OHA will be working with the Council of Student Services Administrators to find opportunities to strengthen the system of services for all 17 Oregon Community Colleges. In the end, we expect Community Colleges will be able to provide access to high-quality resources for the expectant and parenting student population and have sustainable programs and services part of routine student support systems in the community college setting.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.