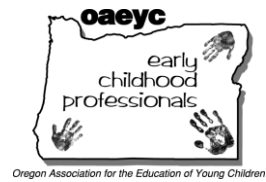


OREGON ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

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

PO Box 60, Gladstone, OR 97027



April 5, 2017

To: Ways & Means Joint Subcommittee on Human Services
Co-chair, Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Co-chair, Representative Dan Rayfield

Re: SB 5526 Department of Human Services, Self Sufficiency Programs Budget - SUPPORT

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 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 and all those working in early childhood education.

OAEYC supports the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program included in the budget for DHS as contained in SB 5526. The ERDC Program is a wise investment that pays off in providing a safe and stable child care environment so that a parent can work. It also provides early learning experiences for young children. We also need to invest wisely in the infrastructure to support these programs. Upgraded billing and payment systems need to be put in place so that child care providers receive timely payments for services rendered. Adequate staffing must be maintained so that parents and providers can get answers to questions and assistance in completing paperwork. Finally, the monitoring process as implemented by DHS needs to be streamlined. The Office of Child Care already has the statutory authority to inspect and monitor for health and safety standards, required training and staff qualifications, and appropriate ratios for both licensed and exempt child care providers. Any monitoring by DHS should focus solely on fiscal and contractual standards such as billing and attendance. Coordination between the Office of Child Care and Children Adults and Family staff in monitoring programs should be expected to avoid duplicative efforts.

We urge you to support the base funding outlined in SB 5526. We also encourage all members of the committee to seek additional revenue sources so that the critical needs can be met for all of the Self-Sufficiency programs to support a better future for all of Oregon's children and families.

Sincerely,

Merrily S. Haas

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Executive Director

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OregonAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for **all** children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. **Our Vision** is that all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential.