



**House Committee on Human Services and Housing
HB 2221
April 10, 2017**

Submitted by Kevin Dowling, Executive Director, CARES Northwest

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing:

I urge you to support HB 2221 and services dedicated to child abuse victims across Oregon.

My name is Kevin Dowling and I work as the Executive Director at CARES Northwest in Portland, Oregon. I also serve on the Board of the Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers.

CARES Northwest is a medical program committed to providing a comprehensive and coordinated response to children alleged to have been abused. Established in 1987, our program has served over 36,000 children and families. Last year, in addition to the 1,570 children seen for child abuse medical assessments, we provided child abuse triage, inpatient care, consultation, trauma therapy and prevention services to 6,802 children.

Stopping child abuse is essential to the health of our community. The *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study* (www.acestudy.org), by Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, highlights how trauma in childhood is common, and associated with some of the leading causes of illness and early death in society (www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/findings.html). Further, *An Assessment of the Economic Cost of Child Maltreatment* released by the Perryman Group in November 2014 estimated the lifetime impact of all social costs and lost earnings associated with one year of child maltreatment to be \$57 billion dollars in Oregon alone (www.perrymangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/Perryman_Child_Maltreatment_Report.pdf).

We believe every child alleged to have been abused deserves access to a coordinated, caring response by experts. That's why CARES Northwest and Oregon's twenty other Child Abuse Intervention Centers are committed to serving all children suspected of being abused, regardless of their ability to pay.

HB 2221 updates and strengthens legislation passed in 2015 (HB 2234). By enhancing insurance reimbursement to centers, it helps make sure children receive the appropriate medical care when there are concerns of abuse, as well as provides for needed mental health and support services to help children and families heal, and stay safe.

I urge you to support HB 2221 to help support a comprehensive and coordinated response to child abuse for Oregon's children.

**Contact Information: Kevin Dowling
kdowling@lhs.org
503-276-9000**

