



Smart policies for today's families.

February 20, 2017

Testimony in Support of HB 2726: Health Care for All Kids
House Health Care Committee

Submitted by Kate Newhall, Family Forward Oregon

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2726. Every child deserves a healthy start in life and no child in Oregon should be without health care coverage. Yet, 2% of low-income children do not have coverage, even if income eligible for the Oregon Health Plan. **Family Forward Oregon supports HB 2726 because ensuring that all Oregon kids have access to health care insurance is critical to the future success of those children and of our state.**

Family Forward Oregon is committed to advancing policies that support families and help them succeed, both in the workplace and at home. Our mission is to create a family-friendly Oregon where all families can be economically secure and have the time it takes for work and family responsibilities. Today, too many families are forced to sacrifice one or the other. Family Forward supports policies, like Cover all Kids, that make economic stability achievable for more Oregon families.

Every child needs access to health care services to stay healthy and succeed in school. Studies show that healthy kids get better grades, attend school more often and behave better in class. However, some children are excluded from Oregon Health Plan coverage despite income eligibility and, as a result, are not able to receive critical health care services. This has long-term impacts on a child's academic and economic success throughout life.

HB 2726 extends the Oregon Health Plan to all children residing in Oregon up to 300 percent of the federal poverty line. This extension will ensure that all children have access to the health care services they need to be successful in school and in their lives. Additionally, HB 2726 guarantees culturally competent outreach to newly eligible children and their families. Oregon needs to take this important next step and extend healthcare coverage to all children.

Family Forward Oregon urges your support of HB 2726, Cover all Kids, because all children deserve a healthy start in life.