

March 20, 2020

Co-Chairs Paul Holvey and Arnie Roblan  
Oregon Legislature  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs,

I would like to urge you to support recommendations by the Oregon Alliance (Safe Kids, Healthy Families, Strong Communities) to ensure that our State's children system of care for at-risk and vulnerable children survives the current economic and health crisis.

In our agency, we serve vulnerable populations ranging from pre-natal to the elderly by providing vital services such as child care, emergency utility payments and both day and night shelter for minor youth in addition to being the region's biggest service provider for the adult homeless population.

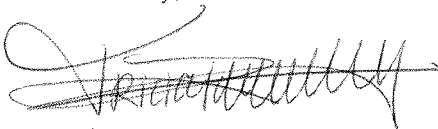
Our community's youth and their families are at high risk of plummeting deeper into poverty and desperation. This is especially true for the unaccompanied minor youth who are left inadequately supported year in and year out by the State system. Now more than ever they need dedicated funding.

We are facing a crisis with staff concerns, workforce challenges, and a potential financial devastation. We might have to close our overnight emergency shelter that houses both unaccompanied minor youth and youth in DHS custody awaiting permanent placement.

We urge you to allocate direct emergency funding to children system providers to allow us to stabilize our workforce, hire temporary employees if needed, purchase critical PPE and infection control supplies, etc.

Our youth in Marion & Polk County and our community need your leadership to weather this crisis.

Sincerely,



Tricia Ratliff  
Program Director  
Community Action: HOME Youth Services  
Tricia.ratliff@mwvcaa.org