



June 23, 2020

Joint Committee on the First Special Session of 2020  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chair Courtney, Co-Chair Kotek, Co-Vice Chair Girod, Co-Vice Chair Drazan, and Members of the Committee:

In 2020, after working in partnership for three years, Children First for Oregon (CFFO) and The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon (CTFO) merged to form **Our Children Oregon (OCO)**. OCO's mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. We elevate data and the voices of communities to amplify the need and collaboratively develop policy and public investments to improve overall child and family well-being across the state. We continue to convene the Children's Agenda, a partnership of 120 organizations, looking at the holistic needs of children.

As you prepare to move into a special session, to address the critical issues facing our state as we respond to COVID-19 and the systemic racism inherent in our police systems, we focus our testimony today on the Police Accountability measures.

### **Police Accountability - Support**

The systemic racism within our policing organizations has a very long history in our country and our state and the time to make changes is now. We look to the leadership of the Legislative People of Color Caucus and support their legislative requests.

As a children's advocacy organization, we see police accountability as a children's issue. Police brutality and the lack of accountability is a public health threat for children, their families, and their communities. Legislation to fundamentally change our policing systems will save children's lives. It will reduce their physical injuries. It will protect their families and save the lives of their caregivers. It will protect their healthy development. It will foster their mental and physical health. And it will reduce their exposure to adverse experiences, trauma, and toxic stress. Eliminating police brutality will have life-long implications for our state's children, particularly Black children.

- LC 49: Prohibits an arbitrator from reinstating an officer judged to have committed misconduct, where the employer followed the guidelines agreed upon through collective bargaining.
- LC 78: Creates a statewide database of police officer disciplinary proceedings, so that problem officers can be identified and prevented from being hired elsewhere in the state.
- LC 79: Requires that instances of death or serious injury caused by police officers to be investigated and potentially prosecuted by the state Department of Justice.
- LC 80: Creates rules requiring police officers to intervene to stop another officer from engaging in an act that is illegal, unethical, or violates rules or policy.
- LC 81: Prohibits law enforcement from using tear gas, long-range acoustic devices, or sound cannons
- LC 83: Prohibits police officers from using force that limits the ability of a person to breathe, including but not limited to choke holds.

As you consider legislation during this upcoming Special Session, we urge you to be open to what is possible. Let's reimagine the world we want to live in and make it real with each decision we make!

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

Jenifer Wagley  
Executive Director

Chris Coughlin  
Legislative Director