

From: Gene Whisnant, Resident of Sunriver Oregon

Date: July 21, 2020

To: Education Ways & Means Subcommittee Honorable Co-Chairs and Committee Members,

I kindly request this committee recommend the Ways & Means Co-Chairs not reduce by \$1.3 million the 2019-2021 funding to "Healthy Families Oregon" which provides critical services to prevent child abuse and neglect in nearly every county in our state.

I submitted the attached "Op Ed" article which was published during the "Child Abuse Prevention Month" in April. The "Op Ed" describes the importance of this issue especially during the current COVID-19 crisis. It discusses the increasing examples of child abuse and how home visiting and "Healthy Families Oregon" can prevent child abuse and neglect.

This increased need to help families with young children will not be available with this funding reduction which is a double reduction since it is effective only for the second biennial of the budget.

The Legislature faces many needs for funding but how can we not prioritize services to prevent child abuse. I urge this committee and Ways & Means co-chairs support of this request.

Respectfully submitted,



Gene Whisnant

Former State Representative and member of this subcommittee

#### Attachments

1. Op Ed on "Prevent Child Abuse" by Gene Whisnant
2. "Healthy Families America" data

**Opinion: Children may be at low risk for COVID-19, but at high risk for abuse and neglect**

The outbreak of the coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, has changed our world dramatically—and rapidly. As the number of cases continues to skyrocket, the growing public health emergency poses a hidden threat to our children. Although the risk to children from the virus itself appears to be low, they face a heightened risk of abuse and neglect in times of extreme stress and uncertainty.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, Oregon has seen a dramatic decline in timely reporting of child abuse—by as much as 70 percent—yet we know children are not safer. Recent school and workplace closures, loss of income, lack of paid sick leave, and reduced access to school meal programs have exacerbated stressors that too many Oregon families already faced. Research shows that these factors directly correlate to increased risk of abuse and neglect, and drive entry into the foster care system. According to Children First for Oregon, the child abuse rate in Central Oregon increased by 25% between the years 2018-19, even before this pandemic arrived.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and this year, our work to support families is more important and vital than ever. Wrap-around support services like Mountain Star Relief Nursery and Healthy Families of the High Desert are key to our child abuse prevention efforts because they have been proven to reduce entry into foster care for families with risk factors known to result in abuse or neglect. The dedicated staff of these programs are working on the frontlines of this crisis to ensure families are able to continue getting the support and resources they need. In a regular month, these workers meet with client families in their homes or childcare settings to support the health and development of children.

Ordinary people across our state are doing extraordinary things to help provide relief in their communities and support their neighbors. In the midst of this public health emergency, they've responded quickly and compassionately, delivering goods to the families they serve and maintaining regular check-ins virtually to continue providing needed services and support—and families and kids will be better off for it. These heroes operate under the radar despite decades of successes in supporting families and reducing rates of entry into foster care.

As we weather this pandemic, it has never been more important to ensure that home is a safe and healthy place to be. Please find it in your heart to understand the hidden implications to children in your community and support the efforts of the organizations listed below anyway you can.

Sincerely,

Former State Representative Gene Whisnant  
(Former Chair of Deschutes County Children & Families Commission)

Contact info:

Mountain Star Relief Nursery  
<https://mtstar.org/>

Healthy Families of the High Desert  
<https://www.hdesd.org/services/healthy-families-of-the-high-desert/>

# HEALTHY FAMILIES AMERICA® HELPS PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Healthy Families America® (HFA) is the nationally-recognized, evidence-based home visiting program of Prevent Child Abuse America®. HFA supports families in the home and focuses on building nurturing, safe and secure relationships between parent and child to maximize opportunities for all children –and parents– to reach their full potential.

**HFA demonstrates positive outcomes for children and families, including reductions in child abuse and neglect.** These positive outcomes have been validated through independent evaluation with significant findings that have been replicated across multiple studies. HFA has undergone numerous rigorous randomized control trials and quasi-experimental studies to document the impacts on maternal, infant, and family outcomes. This growing body of independent research shows HFA decreases child maltreatment.

## OUR OUTCOMES

### HFA HELPS PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

Eight studies show that HFA has **early impacts on child maltreatment prevention** among children ages 1 to 3 years old, including:



The federal MIHOPE study showed that HFA had the **largest impact on emotional and physical abuse reduction** compared to three other models tested.

### HFA HELPS REDUCE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES INVOLVEMENT.

**49%**

FEWER SUBSTANTIATED CPS REPORTS

There were **49% fewer substantiated Child Protective Service (CPS) reports** among young, first-time moms who enrolled early in pregnancy with children between 5-7 years old.

HFA prevents the recurrence of child maltreatment by **1/3** among families with prior CPS involvement.

### HFA INCREASES POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES.



HFA parents had more confidence in themselves as parents and did more to promote healthy child development, such as having **more positive interactions with their children**.

HFA parents also used more positive discipline with less yelling and **less physical punishment**.

*I have learned through Healthy Families America that you don't need to use physical punishment or call your kids names to get them to listen to you. I've learned different ways to be calm and the importance of getting on their level to understand their emotions and to let her know I get it. I can show her that I understand and then she knows she can trust me because I am calm with her.*

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The lifetime economic burden for **each** victim of child maltreatment is approximately \$830,928. By investing in upstream prevention programs, like home visiting, we can prevent child abuse and neglect before it can begin. This not only saves taxpayer dollars, but also helps strengthen families and create thriving communities.

**From:**

**To:**

**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 11:45:55 PM

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La Organización. A family place. Es un Grande Apollo. para Las familias que describo En varios puntos.

1. Cuentan con personal muy amables y capacitados para ayudar alas familias en sus necesidades.
2. Brindan muy buenas herramientas para el desarrollo y aprendizaje de los niños.
3. Ayudan a las familias a conseguir barios recursos. Y información De otros programas.
4. Siempre atentas apoyando en Las necesidades de Las familias. Especialmente de Los niños.

-Lara Beatriz



# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE



*Partnering to strengthen all of Oregon's families*

July 22, 2020

Oregon Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Education  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

RE: Funding for Healthy Families Oregon (HFO)

Chairs Frederick and McLain, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration of the many requests you have in front of you. Members of the Oregon Child Abuse Prevention Collaborative have reached out several times in recent weeks to urge prioritized investments in services and programs that keep children safe and families together, as well as those that target resources toward children in communities experiencing disparities, including Tribal Government services, culturally-specific programs, and those residing in rural and frontier communities.

Today, we ask you to protect the \$1.3M in proposed cuts to Healthy Families Oregon (HFO), the state's largest child abuse prevention program. HFO has managed for many budget cycles now on a flat budget, continuing to serve our most vulnerable families. A cut of \$1.3M will be devastating to the small, nimble programs that operate across the state. As practitioners supporting individuals working on the frontlines in every county, we are observing the stress within our communities and can tell you with certainty: if domestic and sexual violence is on the rise, sadly so is child abuse.

The social and financial returns on investment in HFO speak for themselves:

- 49% fewer substantiated child abuse reports among young, first-time moms
- 1/3 reduction in the recurrence of child abuse and neglect
- Increased school readiness
- Increased self-sufficiency for parents
- Improved maternal and newborn health
- Reduction in crime or domestic violence

In the wake of worldwide pandemic, now more than ever, Oregon families need investments in programs razor-focused on supporting parenting and keeping all kids safely in their homes.

Sincerely,

Child Abuse Prevention Collaborative Members



## Protect Our Children

*Be a champion for kids — learn how to protect children from sexual abuse*

i Finkelhor, D., Turner, H. A., Shattuck, A., & Hamby, S. L. (2015). Prevalence of childhood exposure to violence, crime, and abuse: Results from the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 169, 746-754.

ii Peterson, C., Florence, C., & Klevens, J. (2018). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 86, 178–83.

iii <https://www.childtrends.org/research/research-by-topic/child-welfare-financing-survey-sfy-2016>

iv Healthy Families America (2019). Healthy Families America Site Tracker National Data System.

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Karin Tauscher and I am the Program Manager for Four Rivers Healthy Families Oregon, a program of The Next Door, Inc. We serve families in Hood River, Gilliam, Sherman, Wasco and Wheeler Counties. I am writing today in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I supervise our program and we serve 80-90 families a year with a staff of 10, including 7 Family Support Specialists and 2 supervisors in addition to myself. Since all 5 of our counties are either rural or frontier, we serve families who are far from opportunity and resources. About half the families we serve are Spanish-speaking, Latinx, and we are also serving an increasing number of Native American families.

Our program serves vulnerable families with a high risk of child abuse due to a variety of factors, including the parents' own history as victims of child abuse and neglect, lack of education, unemployment and poverty, social isolation, substance abuse, and mental health challenges like depression and anxiety. Our Family Support Specialists work to connect with families before the baby is born, and provide them with a host of supportive interventions, linking them to resources for food, housing, mental health care, medical care for themselves and their babies, as well as pointing out parents' strengths to them and providing information and activities to help them understand their baby's development. We focus on promoting early bonding and attachment by facilitating parent-child activities that spark joy for the family. Our caseloads are full of parents who have lived through significant trauma, and are determined to learn how to provide a better, healthier childhood for their own children. Once a parent has enrolled in our program, they can receive services until the child turns three and is ready for preschool. Our Family Support Specialists help families to build resilience in parents and children, optimizing the child's readiness for school and a healthy, productive life. Research has shown over and over again the importance of the first three years in a child's life, and Healthy Families is a powerful tool in the effort to create equity for disadvantaged families, by supporting them to give their babies the best start possible.

During this time of pandemic, families are even more isolated than they were, and our communities need our support more than ever before. Our program has continued to serve families remotely during this time, and families express gratitude for this over and over again. When many services disappeared for them, or became much more difficult to access, we moved to remote visiting without missing a beat, because our Family Support Specialists know their families and understand the importance of the support we provide to them.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. Unlike some other programs, HFO does not have a paid lobbyist. Lobbyists cost money, and we operate in a way that utilizes our funds for maximum service to families. Given this, it seems ironic and disappointing that our program is one facing cuts, and it is my sincere hope and request that you leave the Healthy Families Oregon funding intact, so that we can continue to serve our state's most vulnerable families at our current levels.

Sincerely,  
Karin Tauscher, HFO Program Manager  
The Next Door, Inc.

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Anna Williams



July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Amanda Pace and I live in La Pine, Oregon. I am a parent who receives home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to funding cuts to this program.

*Healthy Families is a really great program that has a unique way of providing outreach to families in need. Our Home Visitor is always willing to go above and beyond, offers support in ways helpful to us, and provides good information and resources for our family. Since my daughter's birth, she has experienced medical challenges that impacted her health and wellness. She has persevered through hospitalizations and significant illness that has also had an impact on her development. Having my Home Visitors support has been such a help for us. My daughter is connected with various therapies outside of the home and is also connected with Early Intervention.*

*My Home Visitor helps me help her, and supports me as I work with my daughter to meet milestones. She incorporates therapy "homework" into engaging activities that support her development. She makes it fun and my daughter doesn't realize she is doing work or therapy, to her she is just playing with mom and a familiar friendly face.*

*The Healthy Families program is beneficial and essential to our family and community. The fact that they do home visits so new moms don't have to take the kids out is extremely helpful, especially right now. By offering virtual visits our family benefits from continued support and our Home Visitor is still here for us. I think not having this program is going to cause hardships for parents. A lot of them are not going to know what to do, where to go for support or where to find resources such as clothes, food... who knows what will happen. I would hate to see this program go away, I think it's amazing! My daughters Dad was also upset when he heard about what was going on with the program being in jeopardy. He said this program has been very helpful for his daughter and all of the kids adore their Home Visitor.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my Home Visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Amanda Pace

La Pine, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazen  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Ashley Anderson and I live in La Pine, Oregon. I am a parent who receives home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

A couple days after the birth of my first child I was greeted by one of the staff for Healthy Families. She spoke with me about the program and asked if I would be interested, I said yes! The days following, before I actually met with Melody Carrington for the first time I was so nervous! As a new parent you're worried about how others will judge you and the job you do parenting. I was worried that's what this program would make me feel like, constant judgement. However, to my pleasant surprise, Melody made me feel welcome, like I had a place to turn for all of my child's developmental questions and concerns! I can't even begin to list all of the incredible resources she has shared with me, from community programs to activities to do with my children to encourage their love for learning! Things I would have never been able to find or use without her help and the help of Healthy Families. It hurts my heart to think that the next family or child may not get these amazing resources and visits. Especially in these uncertain times we all need all the help we can get. For my family this program has been an irreplaceable life line.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my Home Visitor, life would be so different for our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Ashley Anderson  
La Pine, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Asia Perkins and I live in La Pine, Oregon. I am a parent who received home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

My Home Visitor was my lifeline on staying sane. She reminded me I wasn't alone. Being a first-time mom it was scary. I had all the responsibilities with my fiancé to take care of this tiny little human being. We didn't know what we were doing. I met a lady named Candy who came after I had my daughter in the hospital. She gave me the opportunity to meet this wonderful lady from Healthy Families to talk about anything I needed to learn to take care of my child and know the next steps my child would be developing. My partner from Healthy Families taught me to be the best mom I could be. She gave me the opportunity to ask her anything while never judging. She gave me the tools to understand ways I can continue to be a great parent. And she backed everything up with research. I continue to be a good parent because I have the confidence that she helped with. I was in this program for 3 years, and I wish it was even longer. I can guarantee you if you cut this program it will be a huge mistake. Don't take this wonderful program away, you'd be depriving parents all around and children. I owe a big thank you to my Healthy Families partner, she changed my life for the better. Please... Please... Keep this program. Moms and parents everywhere around should be able to experience the joy of Healthy Families as I did. My name is Asia Perkins and I live in La Pine, Oregon.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my Home Visitor, life would be so different for our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Asia Perkins  
La Pine, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Cassandra Nida and I live in Central Oregon. I am a parent who receives home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

Healthy Families has been an incredibly helpful program for my fiancé and me since enrolling in April. We have been connected to helpful resources that made a huge difference for us and helped us feel less stressed. We feel very supported by our Home Visitor and she has offered positive feedback anytime we are not sure if we are doing everything right as parents; she reassures us that we do know what is best for our daughter and lets us know how specific things we do as parents have a positive impact on our baby as she grows and develops. This makes us feel good and more confident. She supports us with our daughter's development and by doing questionnaires as she grows, and we know she is doing great and even ahead with some of her milestones. We feel this program is very helpful and has been a really positive experience for me and my fiancé and we know that our daughter is getting everything she needs because we love her, spend quality time with her and make sure she is learning new things every day.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my Home Visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Cassandra Nida  
Central Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

*[Written testimony should be no more than 1 page in length. The C: fields do not count as part of your 1 page.]*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is ashleigh Passarella and I am from mcminnville Oregon and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*My name is Ashleigh passarella and I have been in heathly families since my first born son was 2 years old and he is now 8years old as of a couple days ago, my son did amazing with the teachers and the children all because of heathly families and now my 2nd son is also in heathly families my children have grown so much since being in this program and due to this program I have learned so much on how to help teach my children in so many different ways and also I have learned about alot of groups and classes for mothers like me due to heathly families and I'm also in one of the groups now due to them if you guys cut the program I fear I wont be able to keep learning all the new things I never even knew about to help my children PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE dont cut the program. Mothers like me NEED this program, we NEED heathly families and I NEED my home visiter she is truly amazing. and if it wasnt for her I dont know what I would do.*

Right now with the virus going going on, more then ever mothers and fathers here in oregon need heathly families our children need to know that they will still have this program and they need to know that they will have their teachers to be able to go back to once this whole virus thing is over! My son Robert has yet to be in the classroom due to his age but he is so close to being that age to go into the class. So please this momma needs and wants this program to stay!

Thank you for taking the time to read my email, I do appreciate you taking the time to read it.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Ashleigh Passarella  
Mcminnville Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

Senator Rob Wagner



*[Written testimony should be no more than 1 page in length. The C: fields do not count as part of your 1 page.]*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Atjang Abija and I am from Marshall island and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*(Tell your personal story at this point. Give an example/s of where your home visitor helped you. How you interacted with them and learned from them? How did you get connected with HFO? How long have you been or were you enrolled in the program? How has this changed your life, the life of your family, and especially the life of your baby.)* **(This is a little story of my life and my children's and especially the little one I was accept the HFO when my little one was born in Oct of 2018, when I move here from my country to here, because We were seeking a better live. So I came into the state before my wife get birth of our baby. And someone from the program ask me if we want a home visitor for our baby to develop and many beautiful things . I did accept it because I see the future of our new live here in Oregon. After I get a job we planned to get all our kids here. so we set our goal for save a ticket money. I was really struggle but this program was there to give us support to get our 4 kids from our country. So they're here and they love it here. .**

*(Tell what the cut will do to this program for other parents like yourself.)*

**If the cut will take place now, I believe we'll need to get double work so we can get through the tough time. Especially in this crisis.**

*(If there is something else you want to say, add it at this point.)*

**HFO is a powerful foundation for people like us, because they bring a good example of better live and lots of development. In our country we don't have program like this. Today I have learn many things from the program. My family is so happy with the program because it's build so many happiness in our home.**

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

**Atjang.Abija**

Tigard Washington county

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

*Your State Senator and Representative/s*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Xayeni Preciado and I am from Tigard, Oregon and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*I started this program after giving birth to my baby boy on Jan of 2019. I was going thru a lot at that time, anxiety, depression etc. My OB doctor referred me to this program as she thought it would help me and my kids. I am glad she did. My home visits were and are great! I can talk to them and have the certainty that they listen and help me in any way they can. Not only with helping me get some stuff for my kids but most importantly be good myself to be a great mother. They give me resources and ideas on how to manage and understand my kids.*

*Cutting this program not only will it affect myself and kids but many more families out there that are struggling in any way. It will affect the importance of having someone we can call or even just text for help.*

Commented [1]:

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Xayeni Preciado  
14200 SW 112th ave  
Tigard, Or 97224

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
House Representative Sheri Shouten  
Senator Mark Hass

Commented [2]:

July 21, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Nilza Montano and I am a home visitor in the Washington County Healthy Families program. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. Since joining the Healthy Families team I have visited 44 parents in the Beaverton, Tigard and Tualatin areas.

*In my work with families I have found strength and resilience show up in families time and time again. It takes courage and bravery to ask for help during such a transitional time of becoming a parent, but as we like to say, it takes a village to raise a child. Families that were struggling through to pay bills, pay rent and dealing with mental health issues are struggling more than ever during this COVID-19 pandemic. We have helped families access healthcare and find assistance for bills, rent and basic needs. Healthy Families has been there for families when they have needed help the most.*

*Cuts to our program would mean that less families would be served, many of whom are POC and in other marginalized communities. It would mean no longer being able to provide families with the assistance they need during this vulnerable time. Unlike other programs, HFO cannot shift caseloads. As a result, cuts to my program may result in having to drop services to currently-enrolled families.*

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services

Sincerely:

Nilza Montaña, Home Visitor  
LifeworksNW

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
*Sheri Schouten House Representative District 27*

*Mark Hass Oregon State Senator, District 14*

*[Written testimony should be no more than 1 page in length. The C: fields do not count as part of your 1 page.]*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is **Chelsea Herzog** and I am from **Oregon city** and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this

*I am opposed to cutting funds to the healthy families program, to which I became a part of in 2017. I had given birth to a premature baby and was told of the possibility of having a child who could having difficulty reaching milestones in the first two years. Both growth in the physical form and social emotional form. Because of this program I had the education, resources, support I as a first time mom and to a preemie at that in which I desperately needed. I didn't know what typical mile stones were for kids and I learned a lot about what to expect and what typical infant , toddler behavior looks like, I learned about hunger cues and how to do the 5s's which by the way is amazing!!!! I was able to lean about how to set up a college fund for my baby, I was told about the rent well program to help me get into our own apartment which I can now say we have been in for 7 months! This program helped us give our daughter the Christmas she deserved though a adopt a family program because unfortunately we couldn't provide it on our own. This program has done more for my family then I could ever put into writing. I don't always feel comfortable turning to people I know for help and support because of fear of judgement and the home visitors are so amazing and supportive and I've never felt judged or made to feel less. They are so encouraging and loving to defund or cut this program would truly be a mistake. You could be taking a way a mother only opportunity to learn how to give her baby a wonderful foundation for life and give important skills to inexperienced and even experienced moms and dads alike. I honestly wish the program was a 5 year program and not 3 just because there is sooooo much opportunity to learn and grow from this program.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

**Chelsea Herzog**  
**Oregon City**

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown



Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
*Your State Senator and Representative/s*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Conner Sherrillo and I live in La Pine, Oregon and I am a parent who receives a Home Visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

Being new to La Pine and having just given birth to my twins I was incredibly grateful when I learned about this program. Melody, our Home Visitor, has always gone above and beyond for my family. She introduced us to many new families during our monthly play dates. Her weekly visits are something I really enjoy and look forward to. I think it is so important for new moms to have adult interaction which is hard to get after just having a baby, but knowing I had her visit weekly kept me motivated. She has provided my children with clothes, diapers, wipes, books and many other resources that we are so grateful for. My twins are 18 months now and even through COVID we have been able to keep up with our weekly meetings through Facetime. My oldest son who is 5, looks forward to this time so much. He loves Melody and she goes out of her way to make him feel special and loved (which he really needs due to COVID and having two younger siblings). I will be heartbroken if this program discontinues, not only for my family but for others as well. Melody is constantly sharing resources with us... whether it be rental assistance, help with food, electricity, doctor's appts... a lot of people rely on these things just to get by. This program is essential for parents, please do not end it!

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Conner Sherrillo  
La Pine, OR

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazen  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

July 22, 2020

Dear Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of continued funding for Healthy Families Oregon. I have been working as a Family Support Specialist/Home Visitor with the Lane County Healthy Families Program since May 2018. As a Home Visitor, I work with families who are experiencing risk factors which impact their parenting. We help families identify their values in parenting, set and achieve goals, and provide best practice resources to guide them. Many of the families I work with grew up with abuse and neglect and they did not learn through their own families how to parent with kindness, encouragement, and safety.

One example of this is a single mom I work with who has had four children removed to foster care and then adoption. I have been supporting her in parenting her fifth child. This mom has been exposed to and using drugs since she was nine years old. She grew up struggling to receive an education because family health issues forced her to choose between attending school and caring for her mother. When I met her, she was in recovery, on maternity leave from full-time work, and struggling with housing. Through all of this, she was also struggling, as all parents do at times, with feelings of inadequacy in parenting and caring for her baby. One of my favorite things about the Healthy Families program is that we build on areas where parents have strength and are succeeding. In our weekly visits, we would focus on how much she was accomplishing day to day in meeting her daughter's needs and in giving her daughter the life this mom never had growing up. With my support, this mom was able to secure safe and stable housing, return to work, and continue recovery. Even when her daughter was removed to foster care for three months due to mom allowing baby to see her birth dad, which was not in her safety plan, we continued to meet and focus on her parenting values and choices. She met every requirement by DHS and her daughter has returned to her care and is thriving. On a recent questionnaire from our program, this mom wrote: "Cindy has been so amazing. She has helped me so much, letting me know that I am doing a good job and letting me know what is normal and what is alarming and she gives me amazing pointers and what to do and what I can try. She is a blessing."

In addition to being a Home Visitor, I have been a foster parent in Oregon since 2001. As such, I am well aware of the cost to our state when parents are not able to safely care for their own children. What I love and what is so important about my work with Healthy Families is that we are keeping families together and supporting parents to be successful in parenting their children in spite of the challenges in their lives. Through your investment in this program, you are saving the state money by keeping at-risk children out of foster care, addiction, and prison, which makes things better for all of us in Oregon.

Thank you for your important work on this decision.

Sincerely,

*Cindy Herzog*

Cindy Herzog  
Family Support Specialist/Home Visitor  
Healthy Families, Lane County, Oregon

cc: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

[Sen.FloydProzanski@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.FloydProzanski@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Rep.cedrichayden@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.cedrichayden@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Rep.CaddyMcKeown@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.CaddyMcKeown@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Sen.LeeBeyer@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.LeeBeyer@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Rep.MartyWilde@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.MartyWilde@oregonlegislature.gov)

[Sen.JamesManning@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.JamesManning@oregonlegislature.gov)

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[Rep.ChristineDrazan@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.ChristineDrazan@oregonlegislature.gov)

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[Alyssa.M.Chatterjee@oregon.gov](mailto:Alyssa.M.Chatterjee@oregon.gov)

[lindsey.d.capps@oregon.gov](mailto:lindsey.d.capps@oregon.gov)

July 22nd, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Jamie Lyon and I am a Family Advocate for the Healthy Families program in Washington County. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I have been a Family Advocate for four years and have worked with over 30 families, with enrollment lasting up to three and a half years.

Healthy Families is considered a child abuse and neglect prevention program. Meaning, we take a wholistic approach to reduce stress within the household and increase the parent-child bond. Everyday, I get to be apart of moments of extreme heartache but also moments of extreme joy. I have sat with a mom after she experienced life-threatening abuse from her child's father. I have sat with a mom after her depression led her to attempt to take her life for the second time. I have sat with a mom after medical bills have left her unable to pay rent and provide clean diapers for her 8 month-old baby. But I have also cheered with a refugee family after they purchased their first home in the United States. I have cheered with a teen mom when she graduated high school after having her daughter. And I have cheered with a mom as she realized the impact staying sober for the last four years has had on her life. In all of these moments, I have had the honor to help navigate the tricky parts of life. Whether that be connecting a family to a community resource they did not understand, brainstorming ways to bring in extra income, or setting a family goal plan around mental health engagement. As a Family Advocate, I get to coach, encourage and plan with these families as we dream about the potential of their future and the growth of their children.

Coronavirus and the current state of our economy has left our families needing more support than ever. We have been able to stay engaged through virtual meetings and continued to enroll new families every week. With no end in sight, these families are looking not only for emotional and social support, but tangible support as well. We have helped families navigate seeking health insurance and getting tested for the virus after potential exposure. We have connected families to mental health support as they process this collective trauma and grieve the loss of their community and family members. We have continued to work through curriculum as they navigate how to care for all their children confined to their homes and apartments. And we have supported financially by providing diapers, energy assistance, and rental assistance.

Budget cuts to our program would drastically hinder the work that is already being done through-out my county and the state. Unlike other programs, HFO cannot shift caseloads. As a result, cuts to my program may result in having to drop services to

currently-enrolled families and future enrollment. All of the support and prevention that is being done could potentially cease, leaving families stressed and discouraged.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. In my community, we had to turn away a number of families that could have benefited from our services.

Please reconsider the proposed cuts in order to help us continue the support we provide.

Sincerely:

Jamie Lyon, Family Advocate

Washington County Community Action Organization

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan



July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Kimberly McGinnis and I live in Central Oregon, including Klamath and Deschutes Counties. I am a parent who receives home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to funding cuts to this program.

I enrolled in Healthy Families during the pandemic and my Home Visitor and I have consistent weekly visits using technology/phone chats. She has been very supportive to me when I'm feeling "stuck" or experiencing challenges such as unstable housing and lack of access to basic needs. She works alongside me and shows concern and compassion for me and my children and provides me with helpful resources if I need them. I talk to her about my goals and she is encouraging and supportive. I can ask her anything, including when I need to figure out something for my baby. We also discuss my baby's development and I send her videos of his new skills and milestones in between visits.

It would be detrimental if the Healthy Families program went away. It provides support to families and fills a gap in services that other programs don't provide. Healthy Families covers many things other programs aren't able to do or offer. If this program is not available then you will need to provide these services somehow, otherwise they will not be available at all. My Home Visitor not only provides a wide range of supports but has helpful information on topics that help me keep my baby safe. Healthy Families Oregon is an important program that deserves funding. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Kimberly McGinnis  
Central Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp



July 16, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain

Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

I am writing on behalf of Healthy Families Oregon, which is under the Healthy Families America umbrella. My role as the Program Supervisor for Healthy Families of the High Desert has compelled me to reach out to you. I know you may have already received many letters supporting our program and asking that its funding not be reduced. Included in those letters is compelling statistical data supporting the importance around the role of Healthy Families and the extremely positive impact it has on families.

To that means, I am not going to throw out more quantitative data, as compelling as it is. Rather, I'm going to share on a more personal note, the positive impact I see from my perspective as a supervisor. Healthy Families requires Family Support Workers to have a minimum of 1.5-2 hours per week of Reflective Supervision. That is my role. The stories I hear are raw and often times very traumatic. The ensuing empathy, creativity and passion to support these families by their Family Support Workers is the most amazing thing to witness from my vantage point as a supervisor. Due to my history of also doing direct services in the home, I understand the resiliency these essential workers are demonstrating. And they ARE essential! I can only imagine (and cringe) how devastating it would be to our communities and for our families if Healthy Families Oregon is eliminated or reduced in any capacity. We are already severely under serving due to rigid budget constraints.

The Healthy Families model is a strength based, trauma informed approach. We serve families from the critical stage from birth (or prenatally) to age 3. Our Family Support Specialists are experts at building trust, rapport, resiliency and confidence. Through this initial ground work, they are then more successful in retaining families for up to 3 years-----families who otherwise might decline services, yet are clearly needing support. It is challenging enough to be a new parent, as we know, but many parents are trying to meet that challenge with barriers such as traumatic childhood histories, mental health instability, substance abuse histories, legal challenges, child welfare involvement, food insecurity, unstable housing, and no familial support. Oftentimes, families are dealing with all of the above!

Our Family Support Specialists are at the ready to provide support and much needed resources to help with all of these debilitating scenarios. They do this with a nonjudgmental, strength based approach. Some of the families we serve rarely have been treated with dignity, respect, and kindness. This can be a foreign and even uncomfortable experience for them until they find their own personal power and autonomy. This is a beautiful and very powerful thing to witness! It is hard to make these profound changes in one's life. So hard in fact, that sometimes it is not sustainable in the first attempt, or even (several) subsequent attempts. Again, that is where our support services are paramount in assisting parents through these faltering times.

When Covid-19 hit our communities, it added yet another stressful layer. Our Family Support Specialists rallied to provide support and much needed resources. Many family's needs were complicated and urgent. This didn't stop our team! Our unified approach was amazingly effective in assisting families in whatever capacity was needed. Our Program Manager wrote grants for basic needs which helped with diapers, formula, food, laundry services, and many other essential items. Our team quickly figured out

how best to connect via Zoom, Google duo, FaceTime, etc. This is not a “virtual team”—these are true hands on, in the home, kind of workers. The challenge was great, though they never missed a beat, or a visit. I’m proud to acknowledge these valuable virtual visits continue to date and have only gotten richer and more creative, to include upcoming groups. Our Healthy Families site was the only support service in our local community that did not experience any interruptions for our families!

When parents have adequate stability, they then can focus on the joys of being a parent, as well as intentionally embrace the challenges and stressors that also are part of the parenting experience. Educational parent/child information, and activities to increased positive parent child interactions, are at the heart of what Healthy Families does. When parents know better, they do better. Having the support and expertise, right from the start, can only serve to enhance the parent child bonding and attachment process. And as research shows, this has a profound impact throughout one’s lifetime.

I can only imagine what a challenging time this is for our state and for all of our leaders trying to balance such shortfall and chaos. I honor and applaud the efforts of so many. During these challenging times, I implore you to consider all of the detriments associated with discontinuing such a valuable and successful program such as Healthy Families Oregon. This program is essential, as it leaves such a positive and lasting imprint on families. Our dedication to children and families must not be undermined due to budget shortfalls. Our communities need Healthy Families Oregon!

Thank you for your time and your service,

Sincerely,

Laurie Martin

Program Supervisor  
Healthy Families of the High Desert  
541 639-7489  
[laurie.martin@hdesd.org](mailto:laurie.martin@hdesd.org)

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Fredrick, Chair Susan McLain

Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Fredrick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Melody Carrington and I am the Home Visitor/Family Support Specialist with Healthy Families of the High Desert that serves the community of La Pine; an underrepresented community in rural Central Oregon. I am writing this letter to urge you to reconsider reducing and/or cutting funding to Healthy Families Oregon. As a specialist in my field for over 20 years, I immediately recognized the importance of this program and the profound impact I could have by directly working with parents and their children during the most critical years of their child's development; the first three years. This unique and indispensable program is meeting children's needs from birth to three in the most effective way possible; by offering supports and child development education to parents who are their child's first and most important teacher.

Healthy Families Home Visitors provide parents with equitable, individualized early childhood education support based on the specific tools they need to assist their children in successfully meeting milestones and completing stages of development. We focus on the importance of parents developing strong, healthy attachments with their babies from birth on, to optimize healthy brain development and growth during their most critical years. We also connect families to vital resources if and when they are needed in order to ensure all families have access to what they need to thrive. If Healthy Families services are no longer accessible to our communities we will be doing a disservice to our families and children that already experience barriers to access and lack representation, especially in isolated and rural areas.

Just as we cannot build a sound house without first laying a stable foundation; we cannot disregard or overlook the profound impact parents have in their child's potential for success during the first three years. We must ensure parents are equipped with what they need to provide the care and developmental supports their children require for school readiness and life success. Real change in our communities, our classrooms, our systems as well as reducing risk factors and increasing positive future outcomes for our children all start with parents. All parents should be afforded the right to information and support services that will assist them in providing their children with the best possible start from birth. Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University also acknowledges that in order to create long lasting change and improve outcomes for our children, we must provide support services to the adults that play important roles in their lives. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urU-a\\_FsS5Y&list=PLuKMerO1zya\\_3krFpcOKgaeB2\\_2zQgYua&index=6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urU-a_FsS5Y&list=PLuKMerO1zya_3krFpcOKgaeB2_2zQgYua&index=6)

I understand that funding cuts must be made and many are feeling the impacts of our current economic climate. I am not asking that we receive at the expense of another, I am simply asking you to consider the impact to our families and communities and reconsider any debilitating cuts to our funding that would severely impact or shut down essential pre-existing programs such as Healthy Families. We are considered vital to the communities we serve in Oregon. With your help, we can ensure families are provided continuity of services from trusted, well established Healthy Families staff who provided continual support to families during COVID-19 shutdowns. Without families having access to Healthy Families it would exacerbate "barriers to underserved and marginalized communities and Oregonians" which according to the "Additional Guiding Principles for Rebalancing the Budget" is what this very re-budget plan seeks to avoid.

It is not without heart and human compassion that I send this letter. I send this with the utmost gratitude. I humbly request you visualize the needs of the families in our communities, as they are great. In this current environment families are experiencing increased stress, and support from a trusted Home Visitor is crucial to the health and well-being of our families and children.

We greatly appreciate your attention to the critical needs of vulnerable and underrepresented families in our State. I urge you to consider these families and understand how much they need your support right now. Please do not cut funding to Healthy Families programs as for many of these families we are the only program available to them. These families are counting on someone to advocate for them and I hope you join me in my effort. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Melody Carrington*- Family Support Specialist with Healthy Families of the High Desert  
La Pine, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Jackie Smith and I am from Columbia County, Oregon and I am a parent who has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

Healthy Families has been a big support in my life. When people say it change me, it really did. I had my son without family support and no spouse. I had job but was struggling to pay bills. My rent was always late. Let's just say, things could be better. I enrolled in my local Healthy Families program and that is when things turned for the better. My home visitor listed and gave me the support I needed. She connected me to community resources to help pay my bills. The most important part is that she taught me to be parent. To understand my child's development, health and wellbeing. I strongly believe if it wasn't for Healthy Families I wouldn't be the best parent I can be!

If Healthy Families wasn't around, I don't know where I would be.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Jackie Smith  
Columbia County, Oregon (St. Helens)

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan



July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Fatima Rashed and I am from Beaverton, Oregon (originally from Iraq) and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*I remember when my baby girl was 3 months old and we started to have a home visitor. I was a first-time mother living alone far away from my mother. I really needed parenting help. My home visitor helped me to communicate with my baby. The program is amazing because it helps the families to grow healthy babies. I started to feel confident as a mother and I was able to raise my baby very well. Home visitors through healthy families' program help mothers to achieve their life goals, to learn how to grow healthy babies, and to prepare their kids for the preschool and the school times.*

*The cut of healthy family program will really affect many families. Mothers like me will not be able to find help in growing their children. Mothers will learn how to be confident about themselves and about their abilities to raise kids.*

*Healthy family program helped me to understand my child at early age. Since birth and until 3 years of age I was able to understand my child behavior and emotions. I noticed how this program make me and my child happy and confident.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Fatima Rashed  
9914 SW Conestoga DR #228  
Beaverton, OR 97008

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Oregon Senator Ron Wyden

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Kaylin Noblin and I am from Oregon City, Oregon. I am a parent who has received a home visitor through the Healthy Families Oregon program.

In 2016, I became a mother. Though I was excited to welcome my son Jax into the world, I was overwhelmed by the demands of being a first time parent. At the time I was living hundreds of miles away from my family and friendship network and feeling very alone.

The day after my son arrived, Mandy from Josephine County Health Families program came to see me. She explained that Healthy Families is a parenting program focused on making the transition to motherhood as smooth as possible. I was skeptical. I kept asking “what’s the catch?” As it turned out there was none.

When I was diagnosed with postpartum depression and moved to be closer to family, Healthy Families continued to support me. My home visitor from Clackamas County Healthy Families program became my rock. Dawn was not only there to comfort me, but helped me recognize my own value and strengths as a mother. In addition to celebrating my son’s developmental milestones, we also set goals for my own personal growth and development.

With Dawn’s help and support, I earned a 4.0 GPA at Clackamas Community College and received a national BUILD EXITO research scholarship. I will be pursuing a master’s degree in social work this fall. Without Healthy Families none of this would have been possible.

Healthy Families gave me the support I needed to believe in myself, get connected to resources, learn about my child’s development and be the person and parent that I am today. Please do not cut this programs funding so other parents like myself will have the opportunity to benefit like I did.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor my family and I wouldn’t be where we are today. Please do not cut the HFO budget.



Sincerely:  
Kaylin Noblin  
Oregon City, OR

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Shawntina Holaday and I am from La Pine, OR. I am a parent who receives home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*I have been working with Melody since my son was about 1 month old, now he is 8 months. Melody has been such a wonderful support system in the transition to having another child in our life. She is knowledgeable about milestones, upcoming transitions, and always has positive feedback in regards to our current situation. The Healthy Families program has brought us closer to community resources when needed and offered unimaginable intel to the development of our youngest son, Rylan. We became connected while in the hospital after birth and have since formed an amazing relationship that I am forever grateful to share with her.*

*Cutting of the Healthy Families program will be detrimental to the community of La Pine, as well as my own personal life. There are many families who are able to thrive and learn daily from the information shared through this program. Overall, our community is known to be underserved and cutting resources from growing families is a disservice to many.*

*Please listen to the outcry of support for this program and continue funding as needed for this fantastic opportunity that so many people deserve.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Shawntina Holaday  
La Pine, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

*[Written testimony should be no more than 1 page in length. The C: fields do not count as part of your 1 page.]*

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Angie Olsen and I am from Bend, OR. I am a parent who has received home visits through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*At the birth of my first son, it was in my chart that I had been suffering from Perinatal Depression and dependent on OHP and WIC. These factors qualified me for the Healthy Families Program which was offered to me as a supplemental support system. I was not entirely sure what a Home Visitor did, but I liked the idea of having an informed infant mental health expert come to my home and spend time supporting the journey ahead of me. Carrie (my home visitor) turned out to be so much more than just an early childhood expert but was also a skilled resource connector! She helped me reach my personal goals of getting back into my career. She honored my path of recovery from alcoholism and encouraged me to identify with my potential which bolstered my self-esteem. With her help I became connected to several programs throughout the county that supported my credit building, savings, childcare options, and career path. Simultaneously shed helped me with suggestions for creating attachment, bonding, and both noticing and encouraging important developmental milestones for my child. I looked forward to the projects and information Carrie would bring me and best of all I did not have to load up my child and worry about whether he was napping or hungry or wet/dry or anything. She came to me weekly even after I moved across town!!!! This program helped bridge the gap between infancy and preschool for myself and my child. I felt confident my son was prepared both physically and emotionally to start his journey in preschool, especially because we spent so much time doing activities and assessing his development. I also met other mothers through this program and really got to see the beauty of connection in my community from the perspective of a new mother.*

*Cutting this program would burn an imperative bridge to school readiness for children. It would take away opportunities for parents to learn through education and support versus the legal system. Parents rely on this program to understand what health providers may not have time to share with them (if you have been on OHP-you know what it's like to see a doctor for maybe fifteen minutes and wonder how you are supposed to cram all of your questions into such a short window of time or be waitlisted at the dentist for 8 months only to be told you are being rescheduled once you arrive. Home Visitors help bridge these gaps we feel marginalized by. My home visitor reiterated the message to me that I am the expert of my child and I have the power of a village behind me to advocating for your child's quality of life!*

*I think it is important to add that with the support of Healthy Families I bought my first home and am currently am in my third year of graduate school to become a Clinical Mental Health Counselor. Healthy Families helped me, my son, my community, and countless others who will be impacted by my passion to give back what was so freely given to me!*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Angie Olsen  
Bend, OR (Deschutes County)

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Jack Zika  
Representative Cheri Helt  
Representative Vikki Breese Iverson  
Representative Daniel Bonham  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Senator Lynn Findley  
Senator Tim Knopp

**From:**

**To:**

**Subject:** Fwd: my letter

**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:17:56 AM

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I am writing to you today to share the importance of continued funding and support to Healthy Families of the High Desert; a program that provides early education, home visits, local resources, and overall guidance to new families and their children ages 0-3 years of age.

I have had the opportunity to work in public schools and specifically Special Education for 30+ years. During that time there were many wonderful programs that relied heavily on funding to provide our students with what they needed to be successful individuals throughout their day, their week, their academic years and most importantly, their lives. I believe Healthy Families is one of those programs.

At a time of uncertainty and recent events; talks of funding and education cuts; I wholeheartedly believe that all children along with their family should be considered the freedom to learn, grow, and receive an education early on. For those most at risk who access Healthy Families Program, it is their lifeline to consistent and caring support through their Home visitor. They are receiving personalized care that fits their family's needs specifically; prior to preschool or Head Start. It allows for a successful outcome. The impact this program has had in our small community of La Pine has been phenomenal. There is a great need in our area and the Home Visitors are working at full capacity to provide the very best for their families.

It is my hope that you will consider the Healthy Families Program to be an essential component for children and their families and a positive in providing children's success and readiness for school.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Candence Carrington

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Fwd: Testimony in support of maintaining Healthy Families budget in Oregon  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 2:06:46 PM

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July 21, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Beth Dasher and I am Program Manager for the Healthy Families of Washington County program. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I supervise our program and we serve over 250 families a year with a staff of 15 home visitors across 3 teams.

Washington County is a very diverse region. As one of the more affluent counties in Oregon, it can be easy to overlook the impact of poverty and adversity that many of our families face. Over the past 40 years, the general population of our county has tripled, but the population of families in poverty grew over 500%. And families of color experience poverty at twice the rate of their white counterparts.

While our program is not an income-based program (child abuse does not discriminate based on income), a person's financial status is one indicator that has been directly tied with their ability to provide stable, secure parenting/attachment with their child – and this makes sense. When faced with serious financial insecurity, of not knowing how you will provide the basic needs for your children, it becomes much harder to be the patient, loving parent that you want to be for your child.

This is why having someone along side you is so important as a parent! Someone who can tell you how great you are doing, someone who can give you support and tips for making it better, as well as someone who knows the local resources and can help get you connected. Here in Washington County, our program staff are there for families to be that “adult” contact during isolation, as well as supporting families to apply for needed support services such as energy assistance, rent support and Oregon Health Plan.

Our world is experiencing major societal trauma. Each and every one of us. But we are not in the “same boat”. Your “boat”, my “boat”, they are different from the life rafts many of our program participants are clinging to – please don't take away their support. Our communities – our families – need us now more than ever.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by



the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public. This program provides critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. Healthy Families needs to remain whole to support families now, as well as in the time to come.

Sincerely:

Beth Dasher, Healthy Families Program Manager  
Washington County

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Senator Chuck Riley  
Representative Susan McLain

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Healthy Beginnings  
**Date:** Friday, July 24, 2020 4:53:34 PM

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I call her my Healthy Beginnings lady when I talk about her. Laurel Case met with me soon after I had my child. She brought with her a beautiful baby blanket and a knitted hat with booties. I was really nervous when I had my daughter and I was doing it all alone. Laurel had such a good energy about her and made me feel like she really cared so I decided to commit to having regular visits with her to teach me all about early child development and to give me some company that I so desperately needed. Every visit she would come with informational printouts of activities to do with baby that helped development. Every month she and I would check to see if my child was developing on track with these score chart things. I love seeing how well my child was developing. She taught me ways to encourage my child to crawl, safe and healthy food to feed my child, what child toys were safe and what were not, how to help me gradually introduce my child to sleep in her own space instead of my bed all the time and tons more and I'm grateful she still continues to have visits with me through FaceTime. She helped me become a more confident and strong mom in ways that I would love to pass down to other moms that need it. I can't even express to you how important this program is and how it helps so many new mothers who need it. I am forever grateful to Laurel, Healthy Beginnings and everything they offer to mothers and their children.

-Julia Perez

Sent from my iPhone

**From:**

**To:**

**Subject:** Healthy Families of Oregon is an invaluable community asset to families like mine

**Date:** Friday, July 24, 2020 10:51:08 AM

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July 24, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee: [SEP:SEP]

My name is Mara Clifton and I am from West Linn, and I am a parent who receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

I was referred to Healthy Families of Clackamas County after being diagnosed with perinatal depression. I was facing pregnancy and parenthood without the support of a co-parent or partner, and I was at high risk for postpartum depression. My HF home visitor started meeting with me before my child was born, helping me set up health insurance for my baby, and educating me on what to expect from a newborn. My parents, who had been my in-home support, left the country for work six weeks after my daughter was born, and the weekly visits I received from my HF home visitor were an invaluable source of education and encouragement.

The pandemic has shut us off from many of the community activities we relied on previously, like those at our local library, but HF has been able to adapt their program to replace in-home visits with phone calls and dropping off activities and reading material to my house. This has helped me feel less isolated as a young parent, and has helped ensure my daughter still has the resources she needs to grow and learn. A cut to this program would mean more families like mine missing out on the education and resources they need to raise healthy, nurtured, and well-adjusted children.

This program could benefit every parent in America, but it especially benefits those of us who have low income, are single, young, and facing additional health challenges.

My daughter just turned 1 year old and she is thriving, in no small part because of the continued support we receive from Healthy Families. I have faced various challenges, from pain that lasted six months after the birth to persistent struggles with breastfeeding, but I was able to keep postpartum depression at bay. I was able to show up for my daughter every day. And I couldn't have done it alone.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Mara Clifton

West Linn, OR

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Senator Rob Wagner  
Representative Rachel Prusak

July 23, 2020

Dear members of the Committee:

My name is Hannah and I am from McMinnville and I am a parent who receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*The home visitors have genuinely impacted my daughter, they have given us developmental Tools and activity's, diapers we so desperately needed, and most importantly play dates where the children can socialize like they deserve. We've been with HFO sense my daughter was just a baby, we have learned so much. I heard of HFO from a friend who depended on them.*

*I, my mother, and most importantly my daughter need Healthy Families.*

*The home visitors are completely selfless, getting far less than deserved without complaints, but inevitably this cut could lead to them being unable to help families like mine through these crucial years.*

*HFO deserves the support you have provided until this point, please continue to do so.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Hannah M Poe  
McMinnville OR

C: Joint Ways

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Healthy Families Oregon  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 8:13:54 AM

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July 21, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Lori Colvin and I am Healthy Families Oregon- High Desert Program Manager, serving Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I supervise our program and we serve 133 families a year with a staff of : 7 Family Support Specialists/Home Visitors, 2 Supervisors, an Eligibility Screener who works directly in the Family Birthing Unit at St. Charles Hospital, myself and a part-time Administrative Assistant. Our committed staff are serving families through out rural Lapine, Culver, Madras, Warm Springs, Terrebonne, and Prineville as well as Bend, Redmond and Sisters. Our Lapine Home Visitor even takes on families in Gilchrist.

There are large clusters of underrepresented, vulnerable families in Central Oregon. Healthy Families of the High Desert seeks out families and children who experience barriers to resources and education to provide the highest quality, equitable and individualized services to these families. We understand that babies need to have their social and emotional needs met from birth and a nurturing relationship with a consistent caregiver in order for optimal brain development, to achieve their full potential and be ready for school. We connect families to vital basic resources, alleviating stress so that they can focus on their relationship with their child. Our highly skilled staff meet each family where they are, providing the most current information on child development and parenting.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Home Visitors did not miss a beat, immediately tailoring services to virtual visits. In fact, when many crucial local resources were closed, families became dependent on their Home Visitors to supply them with diapers, formula, food, gas, laundry and other basic necessities. The Home Visitors were many families' one, consistent support during the crisis and became creative providers in the process.

Unlike other programs, HFO cannot shift caseloads. As a result, cuts to my program may result in having to drop services to currently-enrolled families. This would exacerbate "barriers to underserved and marginalized communities and Oregonians." If you could stop and visualize the needs of young, new parents who may be experiencing poverty,

food and home insecurity, mental health issues, lack of family support and transportation, you can imagine what dire effects a cut in funding would do to families who need Healthy Families programs.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, Child Welfare, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. In my community, we had to turn away 47% of families regionally and 56% in Deschutes County who qualified for and wanted Healthy Families Services last year because our caseloads were full. **Any** cut to our funding would exponentially increase those we cannot serve and are in need.

Please view Healthy Families as a **most essential** program and vote to sustain funding at this time. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely:

Lori Colvin  
Healthy Families Oregon- High Desert

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

--

**Lori Colvin, B.S., IMH-E®**  
**Regional Program Manager**



541.749.2138 -Office

541.410.9607 -Cell

*--Building a culture of prevention is not easy. While the costs of prevention must be paid in the present, the benefits lie in a distant future. Moreover, the benefits are not tangible; they are the disasters that did not happen -Kofi Annan*

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Healthy Families Oregon  
**Date:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 7:22:04 AM

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July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Colleen May and I am healthy Families Program Manager for Douglas, Klamath and Lake Counties. I am writing you in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I supervise our program and we serve 105 families a year with a staff of 8 Family Support Specialist totaling 6.95 FTE. We serve a rural to frontier communities with limited resources. Our Family Support Specialist travel anywhere between 45 minutes to 2 hours each way to support our most isolated and high risk families.

Healthy Families is an evidenced based program that helps families build early nurturing relationships, which is the foundation for healthy development and lifelong well-being. We support our families with referrals to other agencies and programs. We support parents to become confident in their parenting skills and knowledge. They gain new insights on how to encourage language and intellectual growth, as well as physical and social-emotional skills in their child. With our families we identify stressors, develop coping skill and support systems. By supporting our highest of risk families, we prevent child abuse and neglect within our communities.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has increased stressors in all families' lives. Parents that were already struggling to meet the basic needs of care for their children (food, health care, shelter and education) are struggling even more. Through, social distancing families have lost many of their stabilizing support systems; family, friends, schools, community resources, faith organizations on already marginalized and isolated families. Our Family Support Specialist, are continuing to reach out to families with phone calls/FaceTime, deliveries of curriculum, and activities for families to do together, provide resources and information to help stabilize our families lives and reduce the fallout on their children. Our community and families need us now more than ever!

Unlike other programs, HFO cannot shift caseloads. As a result, cuts to my program may result in having to drop services to currently-enrolled families and worst case reduce staffing.



Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. In my community, we had to turn away 30 families last year because our caseloads were full.

Sincerely:

Colleen May, Program Manager  
Douglas, Klamath, Lake  
United Community Action Network

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Representative Gary Leif  
Representative Cedric Hayden  
Representative Mark Owens  
Representative Werner Reschke

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Healthy Families Oregon Coalition  
**Date:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:18:36 PM

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Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Brown and I am from McMinnville, OR and I am a parent that receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon, I am writing to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

My husband and I recently have been through many changes, set backs and losses within the last two years; my husband being a USDA food and safety inspector lost his work location due to the Bartels' processing plant shutting down. This caused us to be moved all around the Pacific Northwest spending months at a time living in hotels while his job was being reassessed. During this time we were far from any support group we had in family and friends, and at times from each other when the USDA would require my husband to spend time in a Nebraska plant during the harshest times in the winter. The stress caused my to lose my first pregnancy; a tragedy made darker by the declining health of my mother who has passed away this prior December, shortly after the successful birth of my son from my second pregnancy.

Before her death my husband was given work here in McMinnville, OR at the local Dayton and Carlton Plants through the USDA. This of course marked a whirlwind activity requiring us to relocate from Springfield, OR; finding a new home, new doctors, and the like all while I was pregnant and under horrible stress. Our car faced major repairs due to months of work travel and the like. Stress was at an all time high. But with our son's arrival I was made aware of the wonderful program of Healthy Families Oregon. Taking a chance I signed up for the program and was reached out to by the wonderful people running the program in McMinnville. I have been able to make great strides in creating a new social network through their help; first through the support of Mothers and Babies, then through Make Parenting and Pleasure, and currently through Circle of Security. I have met fellow families who have come through similar circumstances and in some cases are going through similar circumstances. Our visiting teacher for Child Development; Cody, has helped me feel greatly secure in my knowing that my parenting is helping my son grow and learn in the best ways my husband and I can provide.

I can't fully express how important these programs are to my little family and how important it is to continue to fund programs for families who have set backs like my family has had.

Please, do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Brown  
McMinnville, OR

**From:**  
**To:**

**Subject:** Healthy Families Oregon is a lifeline for families!  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 6:54:14 PM

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July 22, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Dixie Devita Osborne and I am a Supervisor with Healthy Families Oregon. I am writing to you today in support of Healthy Families and in opposition to the proposed budget cuts to this program from the General Fund.

Healthy Families offers intensive home visiting services to families in need and is an evidence based program. We provide weekly visits for the first six months (at a minimum!). Based on family progress, we move to visits every other week and eventually to monthly visits. We can enroll a family prenatally or up until a baby turns 12 weeks old and continue services until the child has their third birthday!

There are many ways that Healthy Families Oregon helps the State of Oregon to save money in the long run. As a program we encourage having a medical home, immunizations, proper use of the ER, child development, early screening for intervention, early literacy (school readiness) and family planning. Families in our program report improved quality of parent child interactions, improved parenting and decreased stress.

As we know, families are struggling right now and are experiencing more stress than ever before. They are struggling to meet basic needs and with knowing how to best support their families wellbeing in these unprecedented times. Healthy Families helps prevent child abuse and neglect, we offer referrals to community programs and work on the development of the child. This pandemic has brought to light just how much support we offer to families. The families are very grateful for our support and our community needs us now more than ever! A budget cut could cause us to lay off staff which may result in having to drop services to currently enrolled families.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services. I beg you, please do not cut money from the Healthy Families Oregon budget!

Sincerely,

Dixie Devita Osborne  
Supervisor Healthy Families Parenting Now

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Senator Floyd Prozanski  
Representative Cedric Hayden  
Senator Arnie Roblan  
Representative Caddy McKeown  
Senator Lee Beyer  
Representative Marty Wilde  
Senator James Manning  
Representative Julie Fahey

--

Dixie Devita Osborne  
Supervisor, Healthy Families Parenting Now!  
86 Centennial Loop  
Eugene, OR 97401  
541-349-7791

**From:**

**To:**

**Subject:** Healthy Families Oregon Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:22:42 AM

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July 22, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Jessica Rogers and I am Healthy Families Program Supervisor in Washington County. I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to \$1,031,039 in cuts to this program from the General Fund. I supervise a team of 5 professional home visitors who serve over 80 families per year.

The families that my teamwork with include families experiencing various issues of poverty, families fleeing domestic violence, families seeking asylum, and most recently we began working with moms at Coffee Creek Women's Correction Facility. Our program goal is to prevent child abuse but our team philosophy of what our goal is would be to provide opportunities for children and parents to experience joy together. As you can imagine, the current climate has many families stressed out about a variety of issues, for that reason it feels like our families need our support for than ever!

Unlike other programs, HFO cannot shift caseloads. As a result, cuts to my program may result in having to drop services to currently enrolled families. It would also mean that families that could really use support and encouragement during these stressful times might not have access to our program.

Healthy Families Oregon is a voluntary statewide program that has been supported by the Oregon legislature for over 25 years. We are part of a continuum of services that receives referrals from hospitals, doctors, public health workers, former families and the public that provide critical support to vulnerable children and their parents. Statewide, we only are able to serve approximately 20% of the families who qualify for and request our services.

Sincerely:

Jessica Rogers, Healthy Families Supervisor  
Community Action

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan



July 21, 2020

Oregon Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Education  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chairs Frederick and McLain, Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the board and partners of Prevent Child Abuse Oregon (PCAO), we wish to express our gratitude for the ability to offer testimony in support of a critical primary prevention program and community-based initiative, Healthy Families Oregon. We ask that you maintain the Healthy Families Oregon budget at its current level. We have embraced a vision for a future where ‘all children live in safe nurturing homes and supportive communities regardless of race, class, culture or geography’. Healthy Families Oregon is an important piece of that vision.

In case you are not aware, Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) is an accredited multi-site state system with Healthy Families America (HFA) and Oregon’s largest child abuse prevention program (14 sites currently). Healthy Families Oregon is a free family support and parent education home visiting program. HFO is voluntary and focuses on strengthening the parent-child relationship to assure healthy child growth and development. Home visitors support parents in cultivating and strengthening a nurturing, positive relationship with their baby at each visit. HFO’s dedicated staff have been working tirelessly to provide critical support during this challenging time.

In recent budget cycles, Oregon has benefited from legislative support for early learning statewide. Specifically, your support of child abuse prevention efforts has allowed HFO programs to screen approximately 5,500 families (with nearly 600 still in need of screening) and to provide home visiting services to more than 2,000. However;

- A total of 2,035 families were served and 1,004 families were newly enrolled.
- Approximately 45% of eligible families (578) were not served due to lack of program capacity.
- Nearly 50% of those served were families of color.

(over)

#### Board of Directors

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*Program & Policy Consultant*  
Kevin Campbell, **Vice Chair**  
*Cattle Rancher*  
Jackie Seto, **Secretary**  
*Principal, Side People Consulting*  
Ruth Taylor, **Treasurer**  
*Program Consultant*

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*State Director, Fight Crime, Invest in Kids & ReadyNation*  
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*Executive Director, CASA of Eastern Oregon*  
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*Client Executive, IGNW*  
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Christine Tufts  
*Family Coach, DHS Self Sufficiency*  
Gene Whisnant  
*Ex Officio, Former Oregon State House of Representatives*

#### Executive Director

Pamela Heisler, MPA

#### Mission

*Strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect.*

#### Vision

*All children live in safe homes and supportive communities, regardless of race, class, culture or geography.*

- 73% (1,108) of families indicated a lack of nurturing parents, meaning they experienced a history of maltreatment, corporal punishment or emotional abuse or neglect.
- 51% (770) acknowledged substance abuse, mental illness, or criminal history.
- 65% (1,291) of participants were single mothers with 37% having less than a high school education.

We acknowledge and empathize with your critical budgetary decisions. As an organization, Prevent Child Abuse Oregon asks you to maintain the current funding for Healthy Families Oregon as a critical investment in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

- Cost-benefit analyses show that high quality home visiting programs offer returns on investment ranging from \$1.75 to \$5.70 for every dollar spent due to reduced costs of child protection, K-12 special education and grade retention, and criminal justice expenses.(National Conference of State Legislatures)
- Many Healthy Families programs operate integrally with Relief Nurseries, an effective partnership with evidence of success. It is inadvisable to uncouple these investments.
- National policy initiatives that promote information gathered from the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) substantiate the efficacy of Healthy Families and home visiting. It is one of the few proven, evidence-based investments in prevention. It is truly essential.

Research indicates that the COVID-19 crisis will continue to adversely impact our state's most vulnerable families and, in turn, our communities for years to come. We can avoid what might otherwise become a devastating decade-long impact by maintaining critical child abuse prevention programs today.

Thank you in advance for your time, leadership, and support.

Prevent Child Abuse Oregon Board of Directors

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward and Dan Rayfield,

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senator Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

Governor Kate Brown



**From:**

**To:**

**Subject:** Healthy Families Support

**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:40:10 PM

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Dear Senators, Representatives, Legislators and Committee Members,

A critical and important part of what Healthy Families offers that I did not mention in my previous letter, is that here in Deschutes County, we have home visitors who are also Oregon Health Plan Community Assisters, which enables us to help families with the application process which can be difficult for some familie This is incorporated in our home visits. I will share one story where our services were vital. I had a Native American Family I was serving who was prescribed antibiotics for her baby. When she went to the pharmacy and she was told it was not covered by OHP. She also stated that she felt judged by the person waiting on her. She then said that she was just not going to try and get the medicine she needed because she did not have the money. I was able to call OHP with her, and then get the correct information, which was that the medication was covered by OHP. I then guided her through calling the doctor's office and pharmacy to straighten it out. Afterwards, she felt so empowered and said "that was easy." Empowering families to advocate for themselves and to have access to medical care is another vital service we provide.

Thank you again for your time.

Laura Aaland

--

*Laura Aaland IMH-E®  
Family Support Specialist  
Healthy Families of the High Desert  
541 280-3487*

July 23, 2020 Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain

Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Rosario Leichner and I am a home visitor with the Healthy Families Program in Yamhill County. I have been working as a home visitor for this program since May of 2017.

I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program. Home Visiting is a critical service to parents for a variety of reasons. I am going to share a personal story that illustrates just one reason why this program is crucial. Some of the identifying details have been changed, as I do HIPAA protected work.

I began visiting Maria\* in July of 2017. She was pregnant with her third child. Maria was depressed due to the loss of her second child. She was shy and every time she try to share something with me, she could not do it without crying. Maria was feeling lonely and she did not have any friends. She was afraid of losing her newborn baby.

For the first four months after the baby was born, she was always overprotective and concerned for the baby. Her oldest daughter wanted to name this baby after her previous sister.

This family was going through a lot of trauma and they were not able to recover after the death of her daughter who was two years old when she passed away. It was especially hard for the Mom to express her pain and focus on this new baby without being afraid of losing another daughter.

After working with this family for a few months, I was able to connect this family with support. Maria started counseling and after a few months, she was able to express her feelings. I noticed a huge change in her ability to communicate to the rest of her family. She was able to now be with her other two children and support them emotionally. Her oldest daughter whom remembered her little sister passing needed a lot of Maria's support because she was traumatized.

Maria started to attend our once a month family connections event, where all the families in our program are invited to get together and participate in activities with their families, and have chances to interact with other moms and their children. This was something she really needed. To this day, I am still working with Maria and her family. They will be graduating in October. I am very proud of her and all that she has been able to accomplish.

After all, these years working with her, I was able to support her in gaining more confidence as a mother. I was also able to connect her with more resources in the community and she has become friends with a lot of the mothers that I helped her get connected to.

By me only spending 1 hour a week with this mom she was spared the feeling of being alone, never getting help for her Mental Health, extensive trauma and much more.

The topics I listed above are simple things have saved the state (OHP, foster care placement, Criminal Activity, etc) thousands of dollars. This mom has not had her children taken away nor placed in foster care, which is saving Oregon thousands of dollars.

A continued investment in Healthy Families Oregon is a continued investment in future healthcare, mental health, nutrition, and education programs. During a national pandemic, the critical emotional and educational support we offer families is keeping many of them safe, healthy, and resilient.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without our services, these parents' lives would be so different. I ask you, to please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Rosario Leichner

Yamhill County

Lutheran Community Service NW

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter

Courtney House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

## Healthy Families Oregon Coalition

Co-Lead Beth Dasher  
bdasher@caowash.org

Co-Lead Marguerite Kenagy  
mkenagy@familybuildingblocks.org

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Testimony Oregon State Joint Ways & Means Education Sub-Committee *Department of Education, Early Learning Division, Healthy Families Budget*, July 23, 2020, Special Session

Participant for the record:

Healthy Families Oregon Coalition on behalf of:

*Teresa Aasness, Healthy Families Program Manager, Families First Parent Resource Center. Grant and Harney counties*

*Jessica Barker, Healthy Families Program Manager, Old Mill Center for Children/Families. Benton and Linn counties*

*Samantha Cardenas, Healthy Families Program Manager, Umatilla-Morrow County Head Start. Morrow, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa counties*

*Sarah Closser, Healthy Families Program Manager, Lane county. Lane County*

*Lori Colvin, Healthy Families Program Manager, High Desert ESD. Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson counties*

*Beth Dasher, Healthy Families Program Manager, Community Action. Washington County*

*Jacque Doney, Healthy Families Program Manager, Siskiyou Community Health Center. Jackson and Josephine counties*

*Elizabeth Fussell, Healthy Families Program Manager, Multnomah County. Multnomah County*

*Michelle Harvey, Healthy Families Program Manager, Lutheran Community Services NW. Yamhill County*

*Sunday Kampii and Stacy Lorette, Healthy Families Program Managers, Community Action Team, Inc. Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties*

*Beth Kersens, Healthy Families Program Manager, Clackamas County Children's Commission. Clackamas County*

*Colleen May, Healthy Families Program Manager, UCAN. Douglas, Klamath, and Lake counties*

*Karin Tauscher, Healthy Families Program Manager, The Next Door, Inc. Hood River, Gilliam, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler counties*

*Molly Ziriaux, Healthy Families Program Manager, and Marguerite Kenagy, Sr. Director of Program Administration, Family Building Blocks. Marion and Polk counties*

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, members of the Committee.

On behalf of the Healthy Families Oregon Coalition representing 14 Healthy Families Oregon programs across the state, we ask you to maintain and NOT cut the Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) budget. We understand that these are challenging times. We also know that the Healthy Families program provides evidence-based supports needed by vulnerable families now more than ever. Serving over 2,000 families annually throughout the state, nearly half of whom are families of color, Healthy Families Oregon reduces child abuse and neglect, gets children ready for school, decreases health disparities, and reduces intergenerational poverty.

Healthy Families Oregon implements to fidelity the nationally accredited Healthy Families America home visiting model. Every dollar spent on home visiting programs like Healthy Families, returns an investment between \$1.75-\$5.70. That return comes in “reduced costs of child protective services, K-12 special education and graduate retention, and criminal justice expenses.” (NCLS – Home Visiting: Improving Outcomes for Children).

Healthy Families is one of the earliest and most critical programs in the early childhood continuum of services. We work with families prenatal to age 3, during the critical period of time when the vast majority of brain development occurs and when both opportunity and risk are the highest.

The families with whom we partner have characteristics that render opportunities and positive outcomes further from reach.

- 85 percent of parents served lack a nurturing parent and have a history of maltreatment and emotional abuse/neglect that includes corporal punishment;
- 73 percent of enrolled parents have/had substance abuse, mental illness or a criminal history (43% substance abuse, 50% mental illness, 33% criminal history);
- Almost 40 percent have five or more factors that are known increase risk for child abuse;
- 65 percent are single mothers;
- Nearly 50 percent are unemployed; and
- 29 percent battle depression, 12 percent fight substance abuse and 21 percent have fewer than two social supports.

Although the young families with whom we partner face daunting odds, Healthy Families Oregon is about courage and hope. We have the honor of working with families who, in the earliest days of a child’s life, raise their hand and say, “I want help.” I want help with the incredible responsibility that comes with raising a child. I want help to ensure that my child has the emotional security that comes from consistent, nurturing parenting. I want help to give my child a better childhood than I had. I want help to give my child the best chance at reaching

their full potential.

Parents who are courageous enough to raise their hand and who are lucky enough to get an open spot on a caseload reap these benefits:

- Increased odds that their children will be ready for school due to optimized early learning opportunities;
- Decreased odds that their child will experience abuse and neglect;
- Increased immunizations;
- Decreased emergency room use;
- Improved health care for children and prenatal care for mothers; and
- Increased family connections to critical resources.

The story of Jaylee and Jeremy illustrates the difference that Healthy Families can make. When they learned that Jaylee was pregnant, Jaylee and Jeremy knew they were going to need support. Jaylee was living in adult foster care and Jeremy was homeless. Jeremy was facing medical challenges and living with a hearing condition. Even with their overwhelming circumstances, they were determined to stay together and give their child the best possible start in life. They took a parenting class and signed up for Healthy Families home visits. Both Jaylee and Jeremy were passionate about learning everything they could to support their child's development. By the time their baby Kyle was born, they welcomed him with new knowledge, experience, confidence, and the same determination they had during Jaylee's pregnancy. Soon after, Jeremy was able to move into adult foster care with Jaylee and Kyle and was no longer experiencing homelessness. Today they are proud to say they are living safely together as a family in their own apartment.

Jaylee shared that "Being a Mom is challenging. I am still learning. For Jeremy, it's a little easier because he's done it before. But this isn't a job for just one person. It's a job where two parents become partners. We are 'Ohana' and family doesn't get left behind. If Jeremy and I disagree about something, instead of arguing like before, now we calmly talk through it. There are times that I still feel overwhelmed and frustrated, but it's because I am a new mom. Motherhood can be hard but with Jeremy and Family Building Blocks, I know I am not alone!"

Because of already limited program capacity, last year, 578 families were eligible and raised their hands saying they wanted help, but never got the offer of home visits. Cutting the Healthy Families Oregon budget could result in having to disenroll families presently in the program and leaving even more families without services.

Oregon's new Universally Offered Home Visiting program, modeled after Family Connects, is set to start serving families in January 2021. The benefits reaped by Oregon's investment in that program will be compromised if there are not sufficient resources to support the families who could benefit from additional support. With reduced Healthy Families Oregon home visiting

services, Universally Offered Home Visiting will have fewer referral options. In some communities, Healthy Families Oregon is the only program offering family support services to families with children ages 0-3. Ten regions are set to start Universally Offered Home Visiting, representing approximately half of Oregon's counties; if Healthy Families Oregon services are cut, more families will be left empty handed with nowhere to turn.

We as a society have a responsibility to do the very best we can for our children and to make investments now that will payoff in the long term. Oregon has invested in a continuum of services supporting families with young children, including Healthy Families Oregon. We urge you to retain funding for all programs providing direct services to families with children ages 0-3, including Healthy Families Oregon. These investments will pay off throughout families' lifetimes. We urge you to keep these budgets whole.

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,  
and Dan Rayfield  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Governor Kate Brown

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Esmeralda Fajardo Alvarez and I am a home visitor with the Healthy Families Program in Yamhill County. I have been working as a home visitor for this program since August of 2018. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

Home Visiting is a critical service to parents for a variety of reasons. I am going to share a personal story that illustrates just one reason why this program is crucial. Some of the identifying details have been changed, as I do HIPAA protected work.

I began visiting Laura\* May of 2019. Laura grew up in Mexico with an abusive mother and a father who was in and out of her life. Laura had no support in Mexico and immigrated to the United States in 2015 with her 3 sons. Laura got into a relationship with a man who she thought was just perfect. Later, she began to notice he was not the same person whom she first dated. She continued their relationship and had 3 more children. I began working with Laura when her youngest was born. Laura's baby was born very premature. Laura lives in a high stress home, which made her, go into labor at 26 weeks.

Baby was at OHSU with mom and was later released, but baby began to lose weight. Laura had no support. Laura felt alone. When Laura and her baby got to go home she came back to her stressful environment. Laura's husband is emotionally and mentally abusive. She felt alone.

When I first started services with Laura, she was shy and would not say much. One benefit of Healthy Families is that we have weekly visits, I got to go to their house and got to know Laura better.

As the weeks went by, Laura began to share with me her goals, her interests, her past life and much more. Laura and I began to get closer as home visitor and parent; she opened up about Mental Health! I gained enough trust where I was able to get her connected to a Therapist! Oh was she excited! She finally felt like she was not alone.

I still visit Laura and she has made so much progress. She has taken the Mothers and Babies class twice, she started building her support network and she even takes time for herself.



By me only spending 1 hour a week with this mom she was spared the feeling of being alone, never getting help for her Mental Health, extensive trauma and much more.

The topics I listed above are simple things have saved the state (OHP, foster care placement, suicide, etc) thousands of dollars. This mom has not had her children taken away or placed in foster care, which is saving Oregon a lot of money.

A continued investment in Healthy Families Oregon is a continued investment in future healthcare, mental health, nutrition, and education programs. During a national pandemic, the critical emotional and educational support we offer families is keeping many of them safe, healthy, and resilient.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without our services, these parents' lives would be so different. I ask you, to please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Esmeralda Fajardo Alvarez

Yamhill County

Lutheran Community Service NW

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Isaac Lee Morris and I am from Tigard and I am a parent who currently receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

I am something of an oddity: a single biological father, who has had full custody of their child since taking them home from the hospital. To add on to that, I am genderqueer, and at the time of my child's birth, I had almost no support system here in Oregon. As such, I struggled to find resources in the first several months of my babies life. "Single dad" groups were generally targeted towards non-custodial, cis-gendered, straight males. Newborn groups were almost exclusively targeted towards biological female mothers, sometimes explicitly excluding biological males. Nilza's support through Healthy Families was and continues to be an irreplaceable foundation of my relationship with Luther Augustus. Having access to a caring professional, and working through rich curriculum about recognizing and managing emotions, engaging in active play, watching for and addressing development challenges, all these things have contributed to me being a better parent, and LA having a better quality of life as a result.

I was heartbroken to hear that such an incredible program might be at risk of defunding, particularly in a climate where the allocation of community funds is being challenged. Better outcomes start early, and we need to be investing deeper in programs that give our children their best chance from the start.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Isaac Lee Morris  
Chief Product Officer, Thesis  
Tigard, Oregon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ILM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

Senator Ginny Burdick

Representative Margaret Doherty

July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Cody Alvey and I am from Yamhill County. I am a Home Visitor with Healthy Families Oregon. I am writing today to support Healthy Families Oregon and stand in opposition to cuts to this program.

Home Visiting is a critical service to parents for a variety of reasons. I am going to share a personal story that illustrates just one reason why this program is crucial. Some of the identifying details have been changed, as I do HIPAA protected work.

I began visiting Karley\* in August of 2019.. Karley was raised in the foster care system, has mental health issues, and had recently become homeless. When she spoke about her life during our visits, I would often drive away in tears at the pain that she had experienced. No child deserves to endure what Karley did, and yet, she was dedicated enough to her future child that she wanted to meet with me weekly to work on critical parenting skills and emotional support.

Near her time to give birth, Karley let me know that she was terrified. After experiencing trauma in her previous birth, she felt helpless and scared to visit a hospital again. I sat with Karley for an hour and helped her draft a birth plan that made her feel respected. We created a list of questions for her doctor at her next appointment, and we did a role-play where we practiced how Karley would tell her doctor that she was the victim of abuse, and that she felt scared of a birth experience.

That next month, Karley gave birth. One benefit of Healthy Families is that we have visits weekly, and provide critical postpartum support during the first 3 weeks of a new child's life. We meet with mothers 4 times before they have a follow-up appointment with their doctor. When I saw Karley in the hospital, she was beaming. With a huge, proud smile on her face, cradling her new infant, she said "I had an amazing birth!!! I did it!!" We hugged and I cried tears of joy with her as I got to hold her new infant.

One week later, I called to check on Karley and she was in tears. She had set a goal with me to breastfeed for 6 months. She said "I am pumping but it isn't working, and I can't get in to see my doctor for 3 more weeks...my dreams of breastfeeding have ended just now and I'm not okay." I scheduled a visit for that afternoon.

When I arrived, Karley was still in tears and showed me the problem. I quickly noticed that she had not plugged in the tube to connect to the pump properly. I gently showed her how to use the pump, and she said "You have saved the day!!!"

As you can see, I did not have to be a doctor to support Karley. I did not have to be a psychiatrist or a social worker. I had to be an empathetic person. In a world of advice, I was merely an emotional support person and a fresh perspective. By

spending 1 hour and 5 minutes with this mother, where I made a total of \$18, this Mom was spared birth trauma and her baby got to continue receiving breastmilk. These two simple things have saved the state (OHP, Mental Health, WIC) thousands of dollars. This mom did not need extra counseling for birth trauma, she did not have to rely on WIC for formula, and she did not have to have an infant with increased risk of illnesses due to not receiving breastmilk.

A continued investment in Healthy Families Oregon is a continued investment in future healthcare, mental health, nutrition, and education programs. During a national pandemic, the critical emotional and educational support we offer families is keeping many of them safe, healthy, and resilient.

Sincerely:

Cody Alvey

Yamhill County, Oregon

Home Visitor, Healthy Families Oregon

Lutheran Community Services, NW

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan



# LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Joe Berney  
Jay Bozievich  
Heather Buch  
Pat Farr  
Pete Sorenson

DATE: July 23, 2020

TO: Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

FROM: Lane County Board of Commissioners

RE: Healthy Families funding rebalance due to COVID-19

Co-Chair Senator Frederick, Co-Chair Representative McLain and members of the subcommittee:

In reviewing the Department of Education's rebalance proposal for the 2019-2021 budget that is before your committee for consideration, we wanted to provide comment on the proposal to reduce funding for the Healthy Families program by \$1.03M.

Healthy Families programs are designed to assist parents as they manage their lives through late pregnancy and the infancy of their children. As anyone who has children knows, those first months are exceedingly difficult. And, as most social service professionals can attest to, early childhood is where lifelong impacts from adverse conditions can and do occur. The state provides a modest, but smart, investment in ensuring parents at risk get the support they need. In Lane County, the demand for these services far outstrips our capacity to serve them. Our concern is that a \$1M cut to this program will surely result in future expenses that will far exceed the immediate savings as counties like Lane continually incur costs related to adverse childhood experiences.

Two additional points:

- Programs funded with these dollars are encouraged to become accredited via Health Families America (HFA). This is important because accreditation is proof that local programs are following evidence based models. The Oregon Legislature demands evidence based programs in some, but not all, service arenas. We are of the opinion that requiring adherence to evidence based programs is excellent public policy because it means there is no question that these programs work.
- Aside from budgetary metrics, the Legislature rarely studies the efficacy of its programs. Healthy Families is an exception. As part of HFA's quality performance standards program evaluation based on collected data for continuous improvement is required. The evaluation reports for Healthy Families are easy to find, and drill down to regional and county-level programs. That transparency and commitment to efficacy is also good public policy.

Lane County is almost constantly dealing with social service issues we have little control over. Healthy Families programming is an area where we are working to produce a better outcome for individuals at the moment when these outcomes are actually shapeable. We urge the Legislature to shift Healthy Families funding into the priority category and do not accept the recommended cut.

**ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY HEATHER BUCH, CHAIR, LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Good morning  
**Date:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 11:19:06 PM

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July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Lizette Muniz and I am from México and I am a parent who receives/has received a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

Soy una madre mexicana de seis hijos uno de 17, 13, 7, 4, 2 y una bebé prematura de un año nosotros llegamos a oregon en el 2014 y como una madre busque una buena educación para mis hijos por fortuna mis hijos mayores están en una excelente escuela cada uno y me preocupaba los menores encontré una escuela llamada head star y estuvieron 2 años y a mi parecer no estaba agusto conocí está escuela healthy families gracias a mi niña prematura y la misma gente me la recomendaba y desde que están ahí están súper bien saben interactuar con más niños hacen actividades muy constructivas las vicitas en casa son muy eficiente cada vicita mi hija aprende algo nuevo están muy enfocados en la educación en la lectura etc.

Un recorte a esta organización afectaría mucho alas familias porque en verdad es la primera organización que veo que están muy enfocados en la educación y socialización de los niños en ayudar ala comunidad en estar viendo nuevas actividades para el desarrollo del niño junto con la familia entera los únicos perjudicados seríamos las familias porque nos a ayudado a unirnos ala comunidad y a nuestros hijos.

Ojalá y pensarán más veces en retirar fondos en verdad está organización está muy empeñada en ayudar a los niños alas familias cuentan con un excelente equipo están muy bien organizados que nos sentimos como parte del equipo mi maestra es Esmeralda Fajardo y es una hermosa persona que hace su trabajo muy bien ojalá y escuchen y sea de provecho la opinión de una madre mexicana preocupada por la educación de sus hijos que su única meta es criar buenos ciudadanos independientes , estudiosos, sin vicios en un hogar saludable y que por fin encontró un lugar donde puede estar segura que la educación temprana de sus hijos va por un buen camino.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Lizette Muniz  
I live in mcminnville oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan  
Your State Senator and Representative/s



From:  
To:  
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 3:20:57 AM

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July 23, 2020

Dear members of the Committee:

My name is Hannah and I am from McMinnville and I am a parent who receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*The home visitors have genuinely impacted my daughter, they have given us developmental Tools and activity's, diapers we so desperately needed, and most importantly play dates where the children can socialize like they deserve. We've been with HFO sense my daughter was just a baby, we have learned so much. I heard of HFO from a friend who depended on them.*

*I, my mother, and most importantly my daughter need Healthy Families.*

*The home visitors are completely selfless, getting far less than deserved without complaints, but inevitably this cut could lead to them being unable to help families like mine through these crucial years.*

*HFO deserves the support you have provided until this point, please continue to do so.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:  
Hannah M Poe  
McMinnville OR

C: Joint Ways

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Testimonio ,a Family place Yamhill Country  
**Date:** Sunday, July 26, 2020 11:24:38 PM

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A quien corresponda

Mi nombre es Maria Alvarado tengo una de 2 años y cuatro meses, vivo en 628 nw fenton st. McMinnville or. Mi teléfono es 5034373745.

En esta ocasión me dirijo por medio de la presente para comentar un poco de los muchos beneficios que he obtenido de esta institución que es Family place, para esto tengo que hablar un poco sobre mi: soy madre primeriza y vivo en los Estados Unidos desde el 2018 noviembre no tengo familia aquí solo mi esposo , desde ese momento me enteré de su programa y me recomendaron inscribirme pues tenia muchas dudas sobre la maternidad y el cuidado de un bebé . Desde el primer día que me viciaron fue de gran alivio para mi pues respondieron muchas dudas y mis hermanas por teléfono me decían algunas cosas pero para mi fue mejor recibir a alguien físicamente , en ocasiones por ser los últimos meses del embarazo estaba sin ganas de nada y el hecho de platicar con alguien me servía al grado de decir a mi esposo que me vicitaba una psicóloga de Family place, eso es lo que son para nosotras las madres ,me dieron un manual de lo que tenía que hacer con mi bebe, esto me ayudó a sentirme segura de como estaba cuidandolo y manteniéndolo seguro , aparte todas las visitas me traen pañales y en ocasiones algún juguete o ropa dependiendo , todo eso es de mucha ayuda en lo económico pues es hora que no puedo trabajar.

En estas fechas de la pandemia creo que es cuando más las he necesitado pues como lo dije antes son un soporte emocional es fecha que me resuelven los problemas que surgen con mi bebe pues cada mes y cada año es diferente y con la cuarentena está más inquieta y en ocasiones me gustaría llorar junto con ella, a parte de mis visitas con la psicóloga que se llama rosario, también he llevado distintos cursos del mismo programa , acabo de terminar uno que se llamo “ mamás y bebés “ la psicóloga se llama Romina, este fue de mucha ayuda y me sirvió para conocer otras mamás que tenían un problema parecido al mío .

No se si lean mi carta pero me quedo a Sus órdenes para cualquier duda igual Isela un resumen pues podría dar testimonio de algunos problemas que he evitado Gracias a la información obtenía por parte de Family place.

--

" MARIQUITA "

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Healthy families  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:25:31 PM

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A quien corresponda hago de su conocimiento que mi familia obtiene los servicios de Healthy Families, servicio los cuales nos han ayudado a tener más comunicación con nuestros hijos y vice versa, obtuve la ayuda para salir adelante de mi momento de tristeza al tener a mi bebe y alejarme de el por estar mi bebe en el hospital y yo en casa, desde que mi bebe llegue a casa la trabajadora de healthy families a estado al pendiente del desarrollo de mi bebe, a tener mi familia unida a darnos ánimos para lograr nuestros sueños y salir adelante, en estos días difíciles ellos nos proveen de pañales para los bebés, cajas de comida lo cual es un gasto menos en esta pandemia, por favor no recorten la ayuda que el programa necesita por que al ustedes hacer eso, también le están recortando la ayuda a muchas familias que dependemos de es programa.

-Mayra Rodriquez

Muchas gracias por su atención

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** RE: Health Families Testimony  
**Date:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 8:52:52 AM

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July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Tina Thomas and I am from Tigard, OR., and I am a parent who receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

*Healthy Families came into our life before our beautiful Nevaeh was born. Our home visitor brought us invaluable information and support that provided us with more confidence. They have been there every step of the way. Our Nevaeh is almost two. I am certain that Healthy Families positively contributes to her development.*

*Some child rearing skills are not innate. The first years are foundational. All the information Healthy Families gives us is relevant and timely. They give us the tools to understand child development and to bring calm to the incredibly difficult job of raising a child. I am convinced that we are much better parents because of Healthy Families. They have also brought us books, taken us to the Portland Children's Museum and provided play groups for parents and children to socialize with a wealth of diverse families (before and hopefully after the pandemic). They have given us clothing and toys. They have offered us emergency food. In this time of crisis Healthy Families is more important than ever.*

*Please remember, to qualify for Healthy Family's services one or both parents have had to experience difficulties and abuse. Healthy Families also provides support for parents. They always remind us to take care of our physical and mental health. They help us set healthy family goals. They check-in. It's really helpful. Every stage of development is challenging. These times are challenging. We value Healthy Families everyday when we realize that we do have the tools to understand what our child needs.*

*Healthy families has always treated us with absolute respect and compassion. They are very professional and knowledgeable. We love them and wish their services lasted for more than three years. It would be a shame to defund this program when we are all working so hard to break the cycles of dysfunction.*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my/our family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely:

Tina Thomas &  
Carrie Thomas  
Tigard, OR.

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

*Your State Senator and Representative/s*

**From:**  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Support for Healthy Families  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:03:00 PM

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Dear Senators, Representatives, Legislators and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of Healthy Families Oregon. I have been a home visitor for 22 years and love my job even more than I did when I began. The reason for this is that I have witnessed lives being changed for the better. There really is no other program like ours. First, we serve the highest of risk families, those that have been marginalized due to poverty, race, sexual orientation, addiction, mental health issues, domestic violence and abuse. These families do not trust many outside agencies, due to the trauma they have experienced. Our program's first mission is to build trust and rapport and to develop a relationship where we work together to focus on their goals. We are equipped to offer this support because of all of the continuing education that we are offered. We have been trained in equity, mitigating adverse childhood experiences, addiction, abuse, domestic violence, mental health advocacy, infant mental health, positive parenting, child development, social emotional dev. and so much more. We are highly skilled and highly trained home visitors.

Our program is important because many of the families we work with cannot function in mainstream early childhood programs due to requirements such as attending groups, be it due to transportation, or family functioning. Our program provides intense home visiting that focuses on the parent child relationship and building capabilities in families. It is a holistic approach, as parents who struggle with basic needs, managing their mental health issues, dealing with addiction, depression, domestic violence, feeling marginalized by society and a multitude of other barriers to success, feel stuck where they are at and in need of support. We connect them with resources and supports, and walk with them together in their journey for wholeness.

Research shows not only the importance of early childhood programs in determining future success, but also its cost effectiveness by giving children a motivational, cognitive and social advantage. And the families that we serve are the disadvantaged.

We plead with you to support our program to give the disadvantaged in our state an equitable hand up.

Thank you for your time,

--

*Laura Aaland IMH-E®  
Family Support Specialist  
Healthy Families of the High Desert  
541 280-3487*

**From:**

**To:**

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Testimony for Healthy Families Oregon

**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 10:20:31 PM

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July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Rochelle Scholl and I am from McMinnville, Oregon and I am a grandparent who receives a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon . I am here today to talk in support of Healthy Families Oregon and in opposition to cuts to this program.

My daughter in law was in the program. After Hazel, my granddaughter, was born, in August 2019, a drug test was positive and her mom was also homeless which was a concern. Hazel came home from the hospital with me. My daughter in law did do home visits at my house in an attempt to reconcile with her daughter.

Due to my daughter in laws's drug use she stopped coming around to see her daughter and disappeared from our lives, but I continued with the program's weekly visits.

I have had the same worker from the beginning and she has been a lifesaver. She always asks about how Hazel is doing and how Hal and I are doing. She actually listens to what I talk about , whether there is a problem or not. She always asks if there are things Hazel might need especially after covid hit. The books that are provided with the program are the best thing ever! If I had to describe it they are a baby manual. Even after having 7 boys between us, I refer to these books all the time! They are very informative and filled with great ideas and resources. These would be perfect for first time parents or grandparents too!!!

When covid hit, our worker has given us many resources for food boxes, plants for a garden. They have even brought diapers and clothes!!! We no longer met face to face, but on the phone, which was helpful since we didn't go out much. I really looked forward to these calls since I felt that they are a huge support for me and my granddaughter!

This program is so incredible, that I really wish every single child out there, whether a first baby or 5th, was a part of it. It's an amazing resource especially for first time parents. It would be a terrible loss to us and the community they serve, since these workers make a huge difference in our lives and I don't know where we would be without them!!

*When we first were asked if we wanted to continue the program, we hesitated with continuing since between Hal and I we have raised 7 boys. But I can say that looking back over the last year, I honestly do not know where I would be without them! They have provided much needed support that we didn't even realize we would need or want!!!*

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an important program and without my home visitor, life would be so different for my family. Please do not cut the HFO budget.

Sincerely,  
Rochelle Scholl  
McMinnville, Oregon

CC: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
cont.

Governor Kate Brown

Senate President Peter Courtney

House Speaker Tina Kotek

Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan



July 23, 2020

Chair Lew Frederick, Chair Susan McLain  
Members of the Joint Interim on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the Committee:

My name is Eveliina Wallace. I am from Yamhill County, and I am a home visitor through Healthy Families Oregon. I am here today to talk in support of Health Families Oregon and in opposition to the proposed budget cuts to this program.

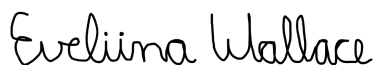
I became a home visitor a year and a half ago. I chose this work because I feel that if we are going to make real changes in society, it is going to be within the walls of our own homes. Healthy Families home visitors go into the homes of families and partner with parents to create change.

I have seen the change in action. I have seen mothers recognize their abilities to care for their children differently than their mothers cared for them. Many of my mothers experienced physical abuse and neglect from their care givers. As we talk about how to care for their child and grow attachment, the mothers I see realize they can be different and learn skills to be a better mother. This realization and change will produce children who take different paths than their mothers did. There will be less drug abuse, they will have the capacity to learn when they go to school and they will know how to have successful relationships, all because of the changes their mothers are making.

It is due to many examples of change like this that makes this program so important to our communities. If the budget is cut, we will lose the unique and valuable resource of home visitors who partner with parents and help to create change.

Again, Healthy Families Oregon is an essential program and without home visiting, life would be so different for the families I work with. Please do not cut the HFO Budget.

Sincerely:



Eveliina Wallace  
Yamhill County, Oregon

C: Joint Ways & Means Chairs Betsy Johnson, Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Dan Rayfield  
Governor Kate Brown  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senate Minority Leader Fred Girod  
House Minority Leader Christine Drazan

Testimony  
Oregon State Joint Interim Ways & Means Subcommittee on Education  
*Healthy Families Oregon Budget Cut*  
July 23, 2020

Participant for the record:

State Director Martha Brooks, Fight Crime: Invest In Kids & ReadyNation  
17355 SW Sugar Plum Lane, Beaverton, OR 97007

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, members of the Committee, my name is Martha Brooks. I am the State Director of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids and ReadyNation, a bi-partisan, non-profit organization of senior law enforcement and business leaders with over 200 members in Oregon. Our law enforcement and business leaders have long understood that to get children started on the right path in life, help them get ready for and graduate from school, and become a productive part of our workforce, investments need to be made all the way along the continuum, but especially at the beginning. That beginning step is at birth through Healthy Families Oregon.

We, collectively as Oregonians, have a commitment to do our very best for our kids and make smart investments. That is why we are surprised and even shocked that Healthy Families Oregon has a proposed \$1.3M budget reduction in the General Fund. **We ask that you not reduce the Healthy Families Oregon budget.**

This is a program that **returns between \$1.75-\$5.70 for every dollar invested in the form of reduced costs of child protective services, K-12 special education, criminal justice expenses and increased school retention that translates into more kids graduating from high school.** Over 25 years, this program has been one of the first that has been cut and one of the last to receive an increase when funds are available. The funding level for Healthy Families Oregon has remained close to its present level for that entire 25 years. Birth to age 3 is the beginning where 80-90% of brain development happens, where the majority of abuse and neglect occurs, and where the greatest positive impact can happen if investments are made.

Oregon's latest birth rate for 2018 was 42,067. Healthy Families Oregon's capacity to screen births in 2019 was about the same as 2018 at approximately 5,500 births. Of those screened, 1,582 were eligible and requested services, but 45% (578) families could not get Healthy Families Oregon services due to capacity. This is extremely disappointing and alarming as all of these families had at least 2 risk factors qualifying them for intensives services and many of them had five or more risk factors. Imagine now, when we start to screen all 42,067 births, starting in January, through the new Universally offered Home Visiting (UoHV). What is going to happen? The referrals are guaranteed to go up and there will be even less services to offer in an already strained program.

In 2019, Oregon's founded cases of abuse and neglect were 13,674. Of those cases almost 30% were 3 years old and under, and 93% of that abuse and neglect was inflicted by family members, most notably the child's parents. Home visiting like Healthy Families Oregon can reduce child abuse and

neglect by as much as 50%. Why are we not investing more in a program that works with the parents early on, can save money, reduce the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and save lives?

Education does not begin at 3, 4, or 5 years old. It begins at birth. As such, we should keep in mind that a child's first teachers are his or her parents, and their first classroom is home. We need to support those teachers in THEIR classroom just as we would any other educator. If they do not have the skills, then that first teacher – the parents – will not do a very good job and we will have failed them. Healthy Families Oregon home visitors/parent coaches help establish a great learning environment. All of this goes a long way to improving a child's early start that gets them ready for Pre-k, kindergarten and school in general.

I have testified in front of this committee and others legislative committees for over 16 years about home visiting and the benefits of Healthy Families Oregon, and it is the same thing year after year with no relief. Legislators love this program, but are not willing to fund it. And I hear year after year from home visitors, program managers, supervisors and parents about how wonderful the program is and how it changed families lives forever.

Oregon needs to put good money to good use and where it will do the most good. Healthy Families Oregon is just that place. I worry about our children and I know you do too, but reducing funding to Healthy Families Oregon at the critical juncture would be a big mistake. It will continue to cost us more and not less. The dividends will pay off not just immediately, but 3, 6, 18, 21 years of age and well beyond. Again, **we ask that you not reduce the funding to Healthy Families Oregon.**