



House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Re: HB 3028, Relating to earned income tax credits

March 25, 2019

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Sanchez, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3028, which would raise and renew Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), as well as extending eligibility for the credit to all working families who meet the income eligibility thresholds. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Advocacy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color. Our coalition is in strong support of increasing and expanding eligibility for the EITC.

The Coalition of Communities of Color is an alliance of culturally-specific community based organizations with representation from the following communities of color: African, African American, Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Slavic. Our mission is to address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism and inequity of services experienced by our families, children and communities; and to organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity.

All of Oregon's diverse communities share a core value—they want to see their children thrive. Yet many communities of color face significant income disparities, due to systemic barriers to education, employment, and building wealth. Despite parents' hard work, many jobs simply don't pay enough to make ends meet. This financial instability falls particularly hard on many communities of color. For example, Latinx and African American children living in poverty are more likely to have a parent who works full time. These economic disparities have widespread and long-term effects on children's educational outcomes, health, and future earnings. We know we can do more to address these disparities by increasing the EITC, with research in other states demonstrating that state-level EITCs are particularly effective programs for reducing poverty among children of color.

In addition to increasing the EITC, HB 3028 would make the EITC more equitable by expanding eligibility to all workers who file a tax return and meet the income requirements. All children of working families who meet the income threshold should be able to benefit from the EITC, including children in households with members who use Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the importance of renewing, raising, and expanding eligibility of the Earned Income Tax Credit for Oregon's families of color.

Thank you,

Jenny Lee
Advocacy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color

