

April 17, 2019

RE: Support for HB 2015 – Equal Access to Roads Act

Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Children First for Oregon represents the interests of Oregon's almost 875,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive.

Parents are the best teachers for Oregon children. And parents can best provide for their children if they are allowed to earn an income. Many working parents, especially in rural areas, must have a car to get to their jobs. By denying a drivers' license to fellow Oregonians who can pass a written safety exam, a drivers' test, and proof of residency, we are denying many parents a safe way for them to provide for their children.

Thousands of Oregon children live in "mixed-status" families, where a parent may be undocumented and their children are citizens or any number of other combinations. The exact number of these children who rely on their parents' ability to drive to or for work is difficult to determine, but these parents are productive members of their community who are seeking the best life for their children.

With the upcoming implementation of the two types of drivers' licenses, Oregon has the perfect opportunity to allow all residents to meaningfully take drivers' safety courses and earn their own standard driver's license. Allowing fellow Oregonians an opportunity to drive legally is only fair and offers their children a better opportunity to grow up and thrive with their Oregon classmates.

We urge your support for HB 2015.

Thank you,

James Barta  
Strategic Director

Together we can build an Oregon where all children thrive.