

April 24, 2019

House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 543 – Children’s Service Districts

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chairs Noble and Sanchez, and Members of the Committee,

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

In every part of the state, we see the lack of child care and afterschool options reducing opportunities and positive outcomes for children. You have spent many hours in this committee talking about the needs of children and families across Oregon and we see SB 543 as an opportunity to provide another tool in the toolbox about how we in Oregon can better support children.

Listed in ORS 198.010 are 27 service district options for voters so they may fund critical local services. Districts can currently address water distribution, fire protection, cemetery maintenance and many others, and we believe it only makes sense to include an option for voters to meet the needs of children in their area.

While some jurisdictions are at their \$10/\$1,000 assessed valuation limit, the majority are not. Children First believes voters of all jurisdictions should at least have the option to support needed services for children. By creating this possibility, you can provide a chance for communities to have a conversation about the needs of children, and Oregonians can learn about the needs of children in their area and about the programs that could improve their lives.

For these reasons, Children First for Oregon supports SB 543.

Sincerely

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Together we can build an Oregon where all children thrive.



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