



Subject: Senate Bill 543 Children's Service District – SUPPORT

To: Oregon House Human Services and Housing Committee

Chair Keny-Guyer

Vice Chair Noble and Vice Chair Sanchez

Representatives Helt, Meek, Mitchell, Schouten, Williams, and Zika

From: Bridget Cooke, Executive Director

Date: April 23, 2019

As the Executive Director of Adelante Mujeres I offer my full support for SB 543 which authorizes formation of children's service districts and provides districts the authority to assess, levy and collect taxes to pay the cost of children's services within the boundaries of the district. SB 543 also defines children's services as services that support children's total health and well-being that are provided to children outside of school hours.

At Adelante Mujeres, we see daily the impact of culturally responsive, high quality services on our kids – it's a game changer, and especially for families where all parents are working. We partner with school districts in Washington County to provide our Chicas Youth Development Programs. Chicas works in local public schools and more than 500 local families each year to offer after school programming, leadership, and community service opportunities for Latina youth and their families. You should see the library at Free Orchards Elementary School in Cornelius buzzing with kids after school. That's why we need this legislation!

Far too many children lack safe supervision and supportive opportunities for out-of-school time. The impact on the development and success of our children is unquestioned. We developed our Chicas program in 2008 after receiving multiple requests from parents who felt they were losing contact with their youth. In today's K-12 world, there simply is too little funding to meet this critical need and it's heartbreaking because we know what needs to be done and how to do it. This measure offers the hope of a funding stream focused squarely on this need. Further, this measure puts the control squarely in the hands of local communities and local voters, with all proceeds invested back into that community... it's a great measure to address a critical need. To my mind, this is a great piece of legislation and I wholeheartedly support.

Thank you for your service in the legislature!

Respectfully,

Bridget Cooke