



May 15, 2019

House Committee on Economic Development
Re: Child Care is Economic Infrastructure

Chair Lively & Members of the Committee,

After 20 years in operation and the second largest employer in Coos County, Bandon Dunes Golf Resort has experienced workforce issues as a result of the lack of quantity and quality childcare in the region. Operating a 24 hour business, Bandon Dunes depends on a reliable workforce of which a key component is the availability of childcare. We have heard time and again from Bandon Dunes staff that childcare is one of the major barriers to employment.

Wild Rivers Coast Alliance (WRCA) is the grant making department of Bandon Dunes Golf Resort which utilizes funding from one of our five golf courses, Bandon Preserve, to grant money to organizations and projects on the South Coast of Oregon. WRCA became involved in addressing the need for child care as we repeatedly heard from South Coast businesses, community members, and Bandon Dunes staff that the lack of child care in our region is a substantial barrier to employers and employees alike.

In late 2018, WRCA funded a business plan and convened a group of leaders in Bandon that included business, health, schools and philanthropy to discuss collaboration opportunities to increase the availability of childcare. There are significant barriers to operationalizing the business plan including cost and availability of qualified staff. This group of leaders remain committed and continue to work together on solutions to overcome barriers and open a Bandon childcare center.

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Wild Rivers Coast Alliance
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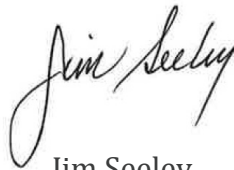
The lack of child care is not limited to Bandon or the South Coast. According to a 2019 Oregon State University study, because of the shortage of childcare, every county in Oregon is considered a child care desert for infants and toddlers. Childcare and education are a critical part of the state's infrastructure for economic development. Oregon workers also need available, high-quality, affordable child care in order to productively participate in the workforce.

On behalf of employers who, in order to spur our local economy, need a workforce with dependable, available, quality care for their children, we request that you recognize that child care is a significant statewide issue that affects Oregon's economy. Today, we request the start of a deeper conversation leading to proposed recommendation's about the legislature's role in addressing this statewide crisis.

Respectfully,



Don Crowe
General Manager
Bandon Dunes Golf Resort



Jim Seeley
Executive Director
Wild Rivers Coast Alliance