

February 4, 2020

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

TO: Honorable Representative Jeff Barker, Chair House Committee on Business and Labor
Honorable Representatives Greg Baretto and Janelle Bynum, Vice-Chairs House Committee on
Business and Labor

CC: House Committee on Business and Labor Committee Members

RE: Support for HB 4096

Dear Representatives,

In Central Oregon we are experiencing a childcare crisis with an insufficient supply of qualified child care providers. **We are currently meeting only 26 percent of the child care demand for children 0-5 years.** The Central Oregon Child Care Steering Committee's mission is: *Community and employers invested in Central Oregon's children, families and workforce to increase the supply of affordable, accessible and quality child care in Central Oregon.*

We have set the following framework to address the child care crisis in our region:

- Create 1,000 spots in the tri-county area by December 2022
- Work with regional banks and other lending institutions to finance low-interest rate loans to providers to help fund start-up/on-going costs
- Create a regional building inspector position to streamline facilities and assist providers in navigating pre-construction, permit and licensing requirements.
- Work with builders and contractors interested in offering pro-bono or low cost work to child care providers.
- Create pilot child care facilities that draw upon the expertise of our higher education institutions
- Assist providers in finding much needed facility space.
- Collaborate with local governments throughout the region to create policies that encourage more child care spots by reducing SDC fees, reviewing zoning requirements for child care, creating "child care" funds, educating staff and more.

As part of a regional effort to help solve this child care crisis, we understand that at its center is the economic hardship of operating a quality child care in homes and centers across the state. HB 4096 is a step toward addressing the disparity between what it costs to start and operate quality child care.

Awarding grants to child care facilities supporting large employers will support private investment in the health and viability of child care for the workforce. The bill's provision to create income tax credit for lessors of real property leased to certified child care facilities will help

incentivize landlords to accept the difficulties in tenant improvements and other complications of allowing for child care in homes and commercial properties. We are also supportive of the income tax credits to staff that receive 18 hours or more, to facilities rated three starts or higher, and allowing residential structures to be used as certified or registered family child care homes. The ability to provide child care in rural areas is even more desperate. This bill allows development of child care facilities as conditional use on lands zoned for exclusive farm use where Oregon families have the most need and the least access. We also appreciate that HB 4096 moves toward improvements in protocol for false reporting of child abuse.

We urge you to pass HB 4096 as it is a thoughtful step towards creating additional child care slots throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Megan Norris
Central Oregon Child Care Accelerator

And the following entities:

