



February 2, 2022

Re: Support for HB 4005

Chair Power, Vice-Chairs Reynolds and Zika, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 4005. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Deputy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color, an alliance of culturally specific community-based organizations dedicated to cross-cultural collective action for racial justice.

Quality, accessible, and affordable child care is a necessity for Oregon's working families. In 2021, the legislature passed HB 3073 to provide relief to Oregon families most in need of child care. Building upon this progress, HB 4005 includes essential next steps to support families by making child care more affordable by increasing subsidy rates, grow our child care supply by supporting new and expanding providers, streamline the state's administrative system, and stabilize the child care workforce.

Child care creates economic opportunities for working parents as well as those who pursue careers providing child care. However, our child care policy has been shaped by a history of systemic racism and sexism, and we need long term, comprehensive changes to make the system work for Oregon's children, working parents, and child care workers.

The disruptions in the child care system during the pandemic pushed many workers, especially mothers, entirely out of the workforce, and imposed major challenges on those who were able to work from home. An inequitable economy has resulted in lower earnings for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Pacific Islander families, making the high cost of child care even more burdensome. Unless we take meaningful action to repair the system now, we risk lasting setbacks for women's economic security, especially for Black, Indigenous, and other women of color. And despite the high cost of care, child care providers—who are disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and women of color—are among the lowest-paid workers in Oregon, with a workforce that has been seriously destabilized by the pandemic. HB 4005 will make critical improvements to address both of these inequities.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I ask that you **support HB 4005** to strengthen Oregon's child care system, increase access for families, and support child care workers.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Lee", is written over the typed name.

Jenny Lee
Deputy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color