

Submitter: Jim Herrernan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery

Measure: SB1591

"We're number one!" We're number one!"

Who doesn't love the feel of those words in their mouth? Who doesn't want to be in the group that is the best?

Often, I ask myself in what areas is America number one? The answer I come up with is, sadly, basketball, military spending, and income inequality. I'm sure there are a few more, but probably not as many as you would think.

One area where we trail the entire industrialized world is what our government invests in childcare per child. Among OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) nations, the United States comes in dead last. Our government spends \$500 per child for child care. The OECD average is \$14,436 per child. Norway, the champ, spends \$29,726 per child. Israel, our closest competitor, spends \$3,327 per child.

I do not believe all those other countries put more money into their children simply for bragging rights. They recognize that the return on investment for money spent on child care is substantial.

Somehow we seem to have gotten the idea into our heads that the return on investment for military hardware and tax cuts for the rich is better than what we would get for investing in our own children. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

We can't do much about what the country does about investing in our children, but we can support legislation in Oregon like SB 1591 to increase childcare availability.

Sincerely,  
Jim Heffernan  
Tillamook, OR