



To: House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services  
RE: In support of HB 3235

February 27, 2023

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Scharf and Nguyen, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3235, the Oregon's Kids' Credit. My name is Jenny Lee, and I'm writing on behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color. We are an alliance of culturally specific community-based organizations dedicated to cross-cultural collective action for racial justice. For over twenty years, our coalition has worked to address institutional racism and economic disparities within our local and state systems and create viable pathways for communities of color to obtain self-determination, justice, and access to opportunities.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen Oregon's families struggle financially to make ends meet, with a disproportionate rate of families of color and low-income families being impacted. For Black, Indigenous, Latine, and Pacific Islander households, these challenges existed long before the pandemic because they had less access to higher paying jobs and wealth-building opportunities. Our families continue to struggle, with prices for housing, food, childcare, and basic necessities increasing and becoming even more inaccessible. At a time when Oregon's families, children, communities of color, and low-income residents still face increased economic hardships, it is a crucial responsibility to provide direct assistance. Additionally, with pandemic-related aid and protections now expired, increasing economic resources for families is even more important.

HB 3235, the Oregon Kids' Credit, is a \$1,200 refundable tax credit for each child that a low-income or working family claims on their taxes, designed to target those most in need. HB 3235 will increase financial resources for families of color and reduce financial disparities, give parents the flexibility to meet their children's most urgent needs, and ultimately set them on a path to obtain self-determination and prosperity through financial stability.

Black, Latine, Native American/Alaska Native, and Asian children are all more likely to live in poverty than white children. The Oregon Kids Credit is designed using the most impactful elements of the temporarily expanded federal Child Tax Credit. That credit had the greatest impact in driving down poverty rates for Black, Latine, and Native American/Alaska Native kids, meaning the policy is particularly effective at reducing disparities.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, we ask that you advance HB 3235 to ensure all families across Oregon that need direct assistance to make ends meet can receive this critical help as they navigate an economically unstable year. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.