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Dear Chairs Fredrick and McLane, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee,

My name is Karin Tauscher and I am the Healthy Families Oregon Program Manager for Four Rivers Healthy Families, serving Hood River, Wasco, Gilliam, Sherman and Wheeler Counties. Our Family Support Specialists are highly trained, dedicated professionals doing incredible work supporting highly stressed families, as shown below.

Healthy Families Program participants have the following successes:

99% of HFO children have a primary Care Provider

85% of HFO children are up to date on their immunizations

88% of HFO families read to their children at least three times a week

93% of HFO families report having positive parent-child interactions

65% of HFO families report having reduced parenting stress as a result of their participation

90% of HFO parents report they have improved social supports as a result of their participation.

Healthy Families has demonstrated improved school readiness by helping families to raise securely attached, curious children who continue to learn and grow when they reach kindergarten and beyond.

I hope you will support robust funding for this proven program so that we may:

1. Offer all HFO employees a salary that is not only equitable but fair. At a minimum, HFO will need \$2.3M plus the 7% adjustment to attain the correct continuing service level.



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2. Achieve pay parity and equity for HFO employees. Present salaries with in the GRB still put the program below what other early childhood programs are paying and is even below the level of other similar jobs. At a minimum, HFO staff still need an additional \$10M to obtain pay parity.
3. Finally acquire a state-wide data system to replace the one that was removed 8 years ago. \$800,000 will pay for a system that will collect and process our data so we can be in compliance with standards required by Healthy Families America to retain accreditation.
4. Adequately staff our state office. Other HFO sites of similar size around the country have 4-6 dedicated staff. Our state system has been desperately understaffed for a long time, and we are requesting funding for 4 new staff to enable our state administration to monitor, train and advise the programs across the state.
5. Serve Lincoln County families. Oregon statute requires funding for Healthy Families in all 36 counties, however there has not been adequate funding to open HFO in Lincoln County. 1.2M is provided for this purpose in the GRB and I support this ask.

Thank you,

Karin Tauscher