



**United Way of
Jackson County**

March 1, 2023

RE: Department of Human Services Budget Bill (HB 5026)

Dear Co-Chairs Campos and Valderama
and members of the Joint Subcommittee on Human Services:

United Way of Jackson County proudly and humbly supports HB5026, specifically the Tax Infrastructure Grant Program in Self Sufficiency Programs. This program, which launched in 2022, ensures low-income Oregonians have greater access to free tax support so they can access the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC).

Oregon ranks near the bottom for uptake of the EITC nationally. The maximum EITC is almost \$7,000 for 2022 and the maximum Oregon EITC is nearly \$700. The Federal Child Tax Credit is refundable up to \$1,500 per child. These are significant dollars that could support families on the path to self-sufficiency and economic mobility, but only if families file their taxes and claim these benefits.

The Tax Infrastructure Grant Program has allowed United Way of Jackson County to dramatically expand our services for both VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) and FSA work. We have increased our preparers and have added the FSA program where people do their own taxes.

To date, we have surpassed last year's total filings! As of the end of last year's tax season, United Way had filed 161 returns. To date, we have filed 181 returns. This is entirely because of this grant! This expansion will make a real economic impact in our community.

This is why we urge your yes vote on HB 5026. Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Dee Anne Everson
CEO/Executive Director