

To: House Committee on Behavioral Health & Health Care

Date: March 14, 2023

RE: Support for HB 2539

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of Parrott Creek Child & Family Services, we urge you to support HB 2539 and the creation of The Oregon Center for Child, Family and Community Health.

By nearly every measure, Oregon is failing its most vulnerable youth – something we should all be ashamed of! Research published by the Oregon Health Sciences University in 2022 found Oregon ranks 2nd in the nation for drug related deaths, first for needing but not receiving treatment and, worse still, first in the nation for the percent of the population 12 and older with illicit drug use disorders. Further analysis shows a 49% gap in the provision of behavioral health treatment services.

The proposed project, led by Trillium Family Services in partnership with OHSU, CareOregon, POIC+RAHS and MOTUS will create purpose-built, trauma informed healing environments that promote shorter stays and fewer returning children and youth for residential care. HB2539 makes a clear investment in transforming the highest level of mental health care provided to Oregon's youth in acute crisis.

Parrott Creek's endorsement of this project comes from our own 54-year heritage of providing residential care to some of Oregon's most vulnerable and marginalized children and youth. We are also working with local and national thought-leaders to re-envision how we conceptualize the care, treatment and physical spaces provided to system-involved youth in residential settings. In particular, we are responding to the growth in demand for mental health and drug-treatment services and for programs that can reverse the disproportionate impact of behavioral health challenges on BIPOC, LGBTQIA+ and other disadvantaged communities.

The Oregon Center for Child, Family and Community Health is a core part of statewide efforts to meet the ever-changing and dynamic needs of children and families and should be funded

Sincerely,



Simon Fulford
Executive Director