

REPRESENTATIVE ANNESSA HARTMAN (SHE/HER)
HOUSE DISTRICT 40



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, members of the committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2504, which will reduce the barriers early childhood professionals with degrees from other countries face when entering the Oregon workforce. Developing a culturally responsive childcare workforce is critical to the well-being of children and families in Oregon.

This legislation directs the Department of Early Learning and Care to develop and implement a system of professional development that provides early childhood professionals from other countries with career pathways, mentorship, and coaching opportunities. The Oregon Registry, a centralized, statewide professional recognition database that tracks individual progress on training, education, and professional development, is a crucial component of this system.

The 2019 report by Oregon State University's College of Public Health and Human Sciences revealed that one-quarter of early childhood professionals in Oregon have some college education or hold a degree from a foreign higher education institution. However, early childhood professionals whose first language is not English are less likely to participate in the Oregon Registry professional development system. This represents a significant barrier to their ability to enter the workforce and provide quality care to Oregon's children.

House Bill 2504 will identify a method to determine the minimum qualifications for an international early childhood professional to participate in the early learning workforce in Oregon and establish minimum qualifications for such professionals, including requirements related to professional training and academic credentials.

By reducing barriers and streamlining the process for international early childhood professionals to enter the workforce, House Bill 2504 will support the development of a culturally responsive childcare workforce in Oregon. I urge you to support this critical legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annessa Hartman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Representative Annessa Hartman
House District 40 – Gladstone, Oregon City, North Clackamas County