

May 2, 2023

Hello Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, and the Joint Ways & Means Committee Members,

My name is Amy Powers. I am a Co-Executive Director at APANO, a culturally specific organization that unites Asians and Pacific Islanders to build power, develop leaders, and advance equity. I submit this testimony on behalf of APANO in alignment with our mission of equity and racial justice and as a coalition member of Child Care for Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to show APANO's strong support of the coalition's ask. We need state investment now. Child care is in a crisis and we need investment in affordability and expanded access to ERDC. We need investment in the child care workforce. We need investment in physical infrastructure so there are safe spaces for child care. This should be a top priority in the state budget. Child Care for Oregon has developed a 3-bucket legislative agenda to build on current legislative commitments to improving Oregon's child care system and continue to invest in the infrastructure needed to ensure access to child care, which was severely reduced during the pandemic.

I am a parent of two kids. I have first-hand experience with the hard challenge of finding affordable and quality child care. I have seen my child care provider face high turnover rates because they were unable to support teachers with a livable wage. My kids and I know what the lack of state investment looks and feels like. It is critical that steps are made to address this inequitable system and invest Oregon's budget into the child care infrastructure.

I urge you to invest in child care for our families and child care providers. Thank you for your time and commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Amy Powers

Mom of two, APANO Co-Executive Director of Programs