

Submitter: Lisa Ledson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Measure: SB5506

Co-Chairs Senator Steiner, Representative Sanchez, and esteemed Ways and Means Committee members, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today. I am here to advocate for increased investment in ensuring adequate childcare access for all children in Oregon. This essential initiative will benefit children and their families and contribute to our great state's long-term growth and prosperity.

Firstly, investing in childcare access is a moral responsibility. Regardless of socioeconomic background, every child deserves the chance to grow and develop in a safe, nurturing environment. By allocating funds to expand childcare facilities and subsidies, we can help level the playing field for all families, ensuring that every child has access to high-quality care and education during their formative years.

Secondly, investing in childcare access is a smart economic decision. Studies consistently show that access to affordable, high-quality child care significantly impacts workforce participation, particularly for women. By removing barriers to childcare access, we enable parents to remain in or rejoin the workforce, contributing to Oregon's economy and reducing the reliance on public assistance programs.

Moreover, early childhood education is an investment in human capital. Research demonstrates that children who receive quality early care and education are more likely to succeed academically, maintain good physical and mental health, and become productive citizens. This investment in our youngest citizens will lead to a more educated and skilled workforce, ultimately driving Oregon's innovation, productivity, and economic growth.

The time for action is now. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical importance of accessible child care, revealing the consequences of an inadequate system on families, employers, and the economy. As we recover and rebuild, we must prioritize the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens and their families. Investing in child care access gives us a unique opportunity to create a brighter, more equitable future for Oregon.

In conclusion, I implore the Ways and Means Committee to allocate the necessary resources to support and expand adequate childcare access for all children in Oregon; this includes maximum funding for SB91 to ensure that disabled children have access to the best care available. This investment is not just an ethical obligation but a strategic and economically sound decision that will benefit our state for future generations. Together, we can create a better Oregon for our children and

families.

Thank you,  
Lisa Ledson, Parent  
West Linn, Oregon.