



Child Care That Works. For Every Family.

To: House Committee on Early Childhood & Human Services
From: Child Care for Oregon (CCFO)
Date: February 7, 2024
RE: In support of HB 4158-1

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, members of the Committee,

If you talk with any parent of young children, you will hear about the difficulty families encounter accessing child care. Both finding a child care provider with an opening for their child and affording child care which can cost more than tuition in a state higher education institution. Nearly every county in Oregon is a child care desert, meaning there are less than one slot available for every three children.

In order for Oregon to have a supply of affordable child care, we must address many complex issues - including workforce and infrastructure. For example, even if tomorrow we somehow had a sufficient child care workforce, Oregon would not have the physical space necessary to provide care for all children who need it. It is critical to invest in child care infrastructure to meet the growing need for suitable space for safe, affordable, and accessible child care.

In 2023, the Oregon Legislature took a big step in addressing this lack of infrastructure by passing HB 3005, which created a Child Care Infrastructure Fund and allocated \$50 million in lottery bonding dollars to this account. We are incredibly proud of this legislation, and thank the Legislature for championing this bill and funding.

Unfortunately, due to logistical issues, like the timeline on which the dollars are able to be doled out, and the high reporting and utilization requirements, the child care providers that are most likely to provide the most needed types of care, are at highest risk of being unable to access these lottery bonding dollars.

To solve for this concern, HB 4158-1 will allocate \$4.5 million from the general fund to the currently existing Child Care Infrastructure Fund to support home-based and small center providers. These providers are those most likely to operate in rural areas, provide culturally/linguistically appropriate care, care to children with disabilities, and offer odd hour care (nights and weekends). HB 4158-1 will also allocate \$500,000 general fund allocation to be used for technical assistance that is to be administered by the Department of Early Learning & Care.

HB 4158-1 will ensure dedicated and flexible funds are available to support these needed care providers in starting or expanding their businesses. This is critical to building the mixed-delivery care system parents and employers need.

HB 4158-1 will take us one step closer to ensuring that Oregonians and their families have access to affordable child care that meets all their needs by providing needed funds to child care providers to start or expand their business.

Like roads and bridges, affordable and accessible child care is necessary infrastructure. Please join us in supporting HB 4158-1.



Marchel Marcos
PPACE Director with APANO
Coalition Co-Chair



Courtney Veronneau
Deputy Director of Movement Building
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Urban League
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