



MEDFORD

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

TO: House Economic Development & Small Business

FROM: Brian Sjothun, City Manager

DATE: February 6, 2024

RE: HB 4098

The City of Medford supports HB 2098, the CHIPS Child Care Fund. Located in Jackson County, the City of Medford has a population of 90,887 and serves as the County seat. Medford is the demographic and economic hub of the southern Oregon region. With the continued growth in healthcare, retail and manufacturing along with retirees discovering this great region, the City anticipates a continued growth rate of 1.8% per year. Medford is currently the 4th largest metro area in Oregon and is known throughout the country and the world for its pear orchards, and is home to Harry & David, one of the world's largest shippers of fruit and food gifts.

The City of Medford is responsible for addressing day-to-day public issues and responding directly to the needs of our residents. We have heard loud and clear that child care is a major concern for families. The City is actually trying to provide them one option through repurposing and operation of the Discovery Preschool for children up to age 5 at the 63-year old Santo Community Center.

Because we understand the need to do more for more citizens, we are trying to increase the program's capacity by 40 percent and to create new childcare option for children under age 3. We are planning conversion of three existing classrooms for full-time childcare use along with the necessary safety and security upgrades to help more children and families.

The CHIP Child Care Fund is exactly the type of tool that many need. We urge you to support HB 4098.