



Oregon moms and caregivers fighting for gender, economic, and racial justice.

To: House Committee on Economic Development & Small Business
From: Candice Vickers, Executive Director of Family Forward Oregon
Date: February 6, 2024
RE: In Support of HB 4098 and the -1 amendment

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Diehl, members of the committee:

HB 4098-1 is a "Win-Win-Win-Win" for our state. This bill gives Oregon an advantage in capturing hundreds of millions of dollars in federal investments, multiplying into billions in economic activity. This bill invests in the state's child care infrastructure, increasing the number of child care slots and reducing child care deserts. This bill makes sure we expand the construction workforce equitably, so women and BIPOC tradespeople can access high paying jobs. And this bill increases the number of Oregon children and families that will have access to affordable, high quality, culturally responsive child care.

This is precisely what Congress intended when it developed the CHIPS Act and included child care and workforce development requirements. Family Forward has been in close conversation with the US Department of Commerce CHIPS Child Care staff while developing this legislation to ensure we are inline with the CHIPS [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) and [guidance](#).

HB 4098 creates a public-private partnership to meet the child care plan and workforce development plan requirements, meeting the "covered incentives" requirement in the CHIPS application.

By expanding an existing federally-funded, state child care subsidy program for the CHIPS construction workforce, HB 4098 meets the child care plan federal standards for "affordable", "accessible", "reliable" and "high-quality." And using the Child Care Infrastructure program, we are expanding child care supply in the areas of the state receiving CHIPS grants and for the hours most needed by construction workers.

I am proud of the work my organization and others have put into the development of this legislation. It is smart policy that leverages existing state programs to help Oregon businesses draw down federal funding and meet the needs of workers. This bill is a model that could be replicated in other states and for other federal funding sources. And it continues to build out our state's child care system, so we can meet the demands of families and businesses.

Without HB 4098-1 to address child care supply and affordability, the CHIPS workforce will continue to stress a child care system that is already in crisis, creating further challenges for families and for employers struggling to hire the workers they need. This bill is a win-win-win-win: for Oregon's economy, for construction workers and their families, for the child care providers that work so hard to serve their communities, and for the semiconductor industry who will benefit greatly.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share Family Forward's support for HB 4098 and -1 amendments. We urge your support.



Candice Vickers, MEd, MSSE
Executive Director
Family Forward Oregon

