

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

RE: Ways & Means Roadshow (HB 5006)

Co-Chairs Lleber & Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

Early experiences, good and bad, have a profound and lasting impact on brain development and life outcomes. Half of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) occur by age 3. Experiencing 4 or more ACEs is correlated with challenges later in life, such as substance abuse and behavioral health challenges. Proven investments in prevention and early intervention are critical in breaking this cycle. **In other words, children's early experiences drive state revenue and spending in the near-term and long-term.**

In the near term, investments supported by the Early Childhood Coalition result in:

- reduced reliance on the Emergency Room,
- reduced involvement with child welfare, and
- a stronger start in K-12 education, with less need for expensive supports.

In the long-term, these investments will result in:

- reduced prevalence of substance use disorder and persistent mental illness,
- increased self-sufficiency, and
- increased income and state tax revenue.

According to Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman, investments in children, especially children under 5, are also the most cost-effective use of public dollars with the greatest return.

In addition to being fiscally sound, investing in young children and their families is morally righteous. When Oregon does not invest adequately in proven prevention, we allow babies to suffer unnecessarily, with a too-frequent result being individual and community harm before we provide support. It doesn't have to be this way.

When we choose children, we improve people’s lives and bend the cost curve on state spending driven by crises.

The Early Childhood Coalition recognizes you face significant uncertainty this budget cycle. In these circumstances, it is critical the state makes strategic investments that provide needed opportunity for families to thrive in difficult times. Given the unpredictable nature of the federal budget, we urge you to stay the course and not make any preemptive cuts to services.

The Early Childhood Coalition has identified a package of investments in young children and families that are urgent to stabilize and expand services now.

Program (bill #)	Agency Budget	Impact	Increased Investment	Total Funds Investment
Employment Related Day Care	DELC SB 5514	Reach 5000 families with child care so they can work +	\$250 million	\$730 million
Child Care Workforce (HB 3008)	DELC SB 5514	Fund apprenticeship programs & restore recognition fund	\$15 million	\$15 million
<i>*Birth to Five Literacy*</i>	<i>DELC SB 5514</i>	<i>Enact the Birth to Five Literacy Plan, including Reach Out and Read</i>	<i>\$25 million</i>	<i>\$35 million</i>
<i>*Relief Nurseries*</i>	<i>DELC SB 5514</i>	<i>Provide proven services to 300 additional families</i>	<i>\$4.9 million</i>	<i>\$33.7 million</i>
<i>*Healthy Families Oregon* (SB 420)</i>	<i>DELC SB 5514</i>	<i>Expand and sustain evidence-based services across sites in Oregon.</i>	<i>\$6 million</i>	<i>\$49.5 million</i>
<i>*Child & Adult Care Food Program* (HB 3201)</i>	<i>ODE SB 5515</i>	<i>Provide \$0.10 supplement per meal to feed children in care</i>	<i>\$4.5 million</i>	<i>\$4.5 million GF/LF + federal reimbursement</i>

Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE)	ODE SB 5515	Fund Adequate Service Level recommendation	\$24 million	\$432 million
Early Educator Degree Programs (HB 3011)	HECC SB 5525	Invest in community college & university lab schools	\$5 million	\$5 million
<i>*Douglas & Lactation Counselors* (SB 692)</i>	<i>OHA HB 5025</i>	<i>Ensure adequate & effective perinatal coverage to improve birth outcomes</i>	<i>\$6 million</i>	<i>\$6 million + state match</i>
Nurse-Family Partnership (SB 1033)	OHA HB 5025	Make permanent 2024 state coverage of Medicaid match	\$1.2 million	\$1.2 million
Birth to Five Social Emotional Health Workforce Package	OHA HB 5025	Expand behavioral health capacity to serve young children, 0-5, and parents	\$5 million	\$5 million
Child Success Act: Upstream Pilots (SB 1167)	DELC SB 5514	Fund 7 local regions to support child success models as demonstration projects	\$12 million	\$12 million

Indicates Coalition priority

Now is the time to invest in our youngest children - so no future legislature is left addressing the long-term consequences of failing to invest in young children today.

Sincerely,

Adelante Mujeres
Ballmer Institute
Children's Institute
FACT Oregon
Families First Child Care Center
Happy Go Lucky Child Care
Healthy Families Oregon Coalition
IRCO
Metropolitan Family Service
Neighborhood House
Northwest Regional ESD
Nurse-Family Partnership
Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries
Oregon Health and Education Collaborative
ORAEYC
Our Children Oregon
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon
Reach Out & Read
Southern Oregon Early Learning Services
The Next Door, Inc.
Yamhill Community Care