

To: Senate Early Childhood & Human Services Committee  
From: Dana Hepper, Children's Institute  
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2026  
Re: Support for HB 4057

Chair Reynolds and members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Hepper, and I am the Director of Policy & Advocacy at the Children's Institute. Children's Institute is a member of the Child Care for Oregon Coalition, and I had the opportunity to work with the Child Care Caucus and state agencies to inform HB 4057. Today I am here to speak in support of this legislation.

Later today, the Ways & Means Education Subcommittee has a work session scheduled on SB 1535 - legislation that passed out of this committee and will allow the Department of Early Learning and Care to pause the ability of TANF families to access ERDC to access child care while they work or participate in other activities to support their families' wellbeing. In this context, now is the perfect time to ensure Oregon is communicating to families about what other options may be available to them to support early learning, child care, and child development. That is what Sections 1 & 2 of this bill will do.

I will admit, I was disappointed to see an amendment adopted on the House side that removed Section 3 of the bill. That section sought to address potential duplication of background checks for early learning and child care providers that might be subject to both the child care "central background registry" and another background check required by TSPC or ODE.

I am excited that Rep. Wise has committed to taking up this issue in the interim - and I want to briefly share why this is important and I hope action will be taken in 2027.

Public School districts play a significant role in delivering preschool to Oregon children. In fact, [Children's Institute recently surveyed](#) all Oregon school districts, and 49 school districts responded that they are currently delivering preschool in their community. 53% of school districts require their lead teachers have a teaching license through the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission.

On and off for about 10 years, I have attended meetings for a variety of workgroups seeking to strengthen systems alignment between early learning and k-12 - with duplicative background checks being an ongoing frustration with no resolution. Here is the current state of affairs:

- Federal law requires anyone working in a child care facility to participate in the [Central Background Registry](#). This must be renewed every 5 years.
- TSPC requires a different background check for teaching licenses, with initial licenses renewed after 3 years and professional licenses renewed every 5 years.
- ODE requires another background check for non-certified school district employees upon hire.

I look forward to legislative direction to agencies to streamline this process for educators.

In the meantime, I appreciate the leadership of Sarah Arbuckle, Rep. Wise, and the Child Care Caucus leadership for lifting up Rep. Nguyen's legacy and figuring out how we can keep making progress for child care. We urge your support.