

OREGON COALITION OF LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

January 28, 2019
Senate Health Care Committee
Testimony in Support of SB 526

My name is Morgan Cowling and I am the Executive Director for the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO). I work with and on behalf of the 33 local public health authorities in Oregon who work to protect the public's health, prevent the spread of disease and promote health. CLHO supports the efforts to implement universal home visiting based on Family Connects in Oregon.

CLHO supports universal home-visiting model based on Family Connects because it is a voluntary, evidence-based solution that positively impacts child health, maternal health, child development, school readiness, positive parenting practices, and reduces child maltreatment.

Most families report needing support after the birth of a new baby. One in four Oregon women report symptoms of prenatal or postpartum depression which can put babies at risk for developmental, emotional, behavioral, and learning problems. One universal home visiting program called Family Connects showed that participating families had increased quality parenting behaviors and home environments and a decrease in maternal clinical anxiety and infant emergency medical care. In fact, for every dollar invested in the program, there was \$3.17 saved, primarily from reduced infant emergency medical care.

Local public health authorities in Oregon implement nurse-led and nurse-based home-visiting programs and stand ready to be active participants in the implementation of Family Connects.

CLHO supports increasing access and referrals to comprehensive, preventive healthcare which will lead to healthier individuals, and a healthier state. Establishing a universal home visiting program will help Oregon families that need it during the challenging transition of a new baby. CLHO urges the Senate Health Care Committee to continue to move forward this important program in Oregon.

Respectfully,

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Executive Director
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