

March 6, 2019

Re: HB 5015 – Early Education Investments

Chair Frederick, Chair McLain, and members of the committee,

Children First for Oregon represents the interests of Oregon's almost 875,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive.

To achieve this goal, we must invest in children when their brains are experiencing the greatest development. In the first few years of life, children are forming more than 1 million neural connections per second to create 90% of their brain development. Investments in quality early education programs produce improved outcomes into adulthood with returns that benefit public budgets through reduced crime costs, special education and welfare savings, and increased income taxes.

Early education programs work best when they work together. An interlocking array of programs: Early Childhood Hubs, Head Start, Preschool Promise, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE), Early Childhood Equity Fund, and others all need each other to offer the best possible services to children and their parents so the state can reap their benefits.

We look forward to working with members of the Education Subcommittee to build the case for increased investments throughout the education, and particularly in our quality early education programs.

Sincerely,

James Barta
Strategic Director

Together we can build an Oregon where all children thrive.