



ALBERTINA  
**KERR**

The Honorable Sara Gelser  
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee  
State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon

Re: Support of SB 1 and SB 221 – Children and Youth with Specialized Needs Investments

Dear Senator Gelser and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jeff Carr and I am the CEO of Albertina Kerr, one of the largest non-profit human service organizations in the state that has been serving vulnerable Oregonians for over 112 years. Kerr empowers children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health challenges and other social barriers to lead self-determined lives and reach their full potential.

I served on the Children and Youth with Specialized Needs Task Force that met regularly for over 6 months to discuss the challenges many of our children, youth, and their families with complex needs face in our State. Unfortunately, Oregon's current system serving children and youth with specialized needs does not support intervention and treatment at adequate levels or with cultural responsiveness, nor does it adequately serve this group when they are in crisis and after they have stabilized.

SB 1 and SB 221 will invest significant resources to help children and families with complex needs and establish a leadership group appointed by the Governor to provide oversight and accountability, incentivize change, and address gaps in the current system. I believe this represents major progress in solving these issues by investing in critically needed services to help families stay together safely and successfully whenever possible, creating high quality placements for youth who need a brief out of home placement, and supporting the expansion of crisis support programs.

Thank you for your efforts championing the needs of children and youth with specialized needs. I respectfully urge your support on SB 1 and SB 221, which will take the necessary next steps towards supporting children across Oregon.

Sincerely,

Jeff Carr  
Chief Executive Officer

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