

March 27, 2019

RE: SB 5525 – Public Health Budget

Co-Chairs Beyer, Nosse, 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.

A child's brain development is most rapid in the first three years of life. Voluntary home visiting programs follow evidence-based practice based on decades of research to make life changing impacts on both the child and the parent. This research shows home visiting programs have tremendous returns on investment in lower use of social services while lowering crime.<sup>1</sup>

In the proposed Public Health budget in SB 5525 there are two different home visiting programs, one new and one old. The universally offered home visiting program funded via policy option package 401 and described in SB 526 is based on Family Connects. Originally developed in Durham, North Carolina, Family Connects has been implemented in 23 jurisdictions in 12 states including Oregon's Lincoln County. Measuring the decrease in emergency room visits by families in Durham compared to a control group shows Family Connects will more than pay for the \$4.1 million general fund in the first subsequent year by reduced emergency room visits alone.

Already reaching more than 10,000 families, Babies First! serves those families who are at particular risk. These families are Medicaid-eligible with nurse visits beginning before birth of the child. Babies First! leverages \$1.5 million of general fund to generate \$4.5 million in local funding and \$12 million in federal funding to make a critical difference for families at risk. This successful program should be continued.

Children First for Oregon urges your support for both Babies First! and Family Connects.

Thank you for your consideration,

James Barta  
Strategic Director

---

<sup>1</sup> Karoly, L.A., Kilburn, M.R., and Cannon, J.S. "Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise." (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2005). 98.  
[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND\\_MG341.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG341.pdf)