



Klamath-Lake CARES (Child Abuse Response and Evaluation Services)

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An affiliated program of Sky Lakes Medical Center

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Chair Keny-Guyer

Vice Chairs Williams and Noble

House Committee on Housing and Human Services, Members

My name is Ken Morton. I am the Executive Director of Klamath-Lake CARES, a Child Advocacy Center located in Klamath Falls OR. We provide intervention services to children and families in both Klamath and Lake Counties. I am asking on behalf of all the children we serve, as well as those served by other Center's throughout Oregon for your support of HB 4112.

Receiving this funding would allow us to build the capacity of our organization and enable us to provide more services to children and families who experience abuse. Inadequate funding means some children will not receive these services, or would be forced to wait. Investing in Centers saves money because early intervention and healing of trauma can prevent poor outcomes tied to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).

Without CAC's, children would be seen at emergency rooms or local clinics. They may have to go to Law Enforcement, Department of Human Services or other agencies, interacting with multiple people, discussing the details of their abuse on many different occasions. This is far more traumatic for both the kids and their families. Not to be seen at a Child Advocacy Center would also means not having access to the wrap-around follow-up therapeutic healing services that many Centers offer.

Ultimately, passing HB 4112 will make a huge difference in the lives of children in our collective communities. More importantly, state investment of funding will move us closer to an Oregon where children, regardless of their ability to pay, will be able to receive the holistic services provided by experts in the field in the child-friendly, safe and neutral locations that Centers offer.

We know that without intervention, children experiencing ongoing and repeated trauma are more likely to experience housing instability, adverse health outcomes, and physical and mental health symptoms. With intervention, we hope to reduce unnecessary trauma experienced by children and to provide opportunities for children to heal from their abuse. We know we are making a huge difference, and urge your support of HB 4112 to even further increase our impact.

With respect for the work you do and with many thanks,

Ken Morton, Executive Director