



**TO:** The Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services  
**FROM:** Dan Saltzman, Bridge Meadows board member, former Portland city commissioner  
**DATE:** March 20, 2021  
**RE:** Support for DHS Foster Care System Programs & Supports in SB 5529

Dear Co-Chair Lieber, Co-Chair Nosse and members of the committee,

My name is Dan Saltzman, and I am a Bridge Meadows board member and long-time supporter of the organization. Bridge Meadows builds intergenerational communities to support families adopting children out of the foster care system. We are a member of the Foster Homes of Healing coalition and we are writing to express our support for critical programming and investments in Oregon's foster care system.

The primary purpose of Foster Homes of Healing is to elevate the quality of Foster Care in Oregon. In 2019 the Oregon State Legislature made strategic investments to improve the foster care system and better support children and youth in foster care. Our Coalition urges the legislature to continue this support. In particular, we encourage the committee to maintain funding for the KEEP program and Treatment Foster Care Oregon. At Bridge Meadows we often speak of the importance of caring for the caregivers, whether parents, grandparents or child welfare workers, for they form the safety net that protects children from toxic stress. KEEP and Treatment Foster Care Oregon both provide critical support for families at Bridge Meadows. This support means kids are more likely to thrive, because parents have the resources they need. For this reason, we ask that the Committee consider making a much-needed investment to add additional child welfare caseworkers to support youth and families.

In the past several years Oregon has made great strides toward improving our foster care system for youth and families. We hope that this committee will choose to maintain the evidence-based investments made in 2019 and consider additional support for the Oregon Department of Human Services by funding additional caseworkers.

Sincerely,

Dan Saltzman

*Bridge Meadows board member and former Portland city commissioner*

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