

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EQUITY COLLABORATIVE

April 8, 2021

## Testimony re: Senate Joint Memorial 1

Dear Chairs Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation,

The Early Childhood Equity Collaborative is a coalition of community-based organizations with decades of experience providing culturally-specific services and programs to children and families. We urge your support of Senate Joint Memorial 1 to send a strong message to federal immigration officials, Congress, and President Biden to keep families together and to cultivate the conditions for children and families to thrive.

Imagine you are a young child at a school bus stop or in a preschool. You're there being dropped off by your parent and all of a sudden immigration enforcement shows up and attempts to tear your family apart. Or maybe it's your best friend's family. Regardless, the impact is devastating and traumatic to witness and experience, especially as a young child.

This resolution was initiated by one of our founding partner organizations, Latino Network, with the support of other partner organizations such as Children's Institute. This resolution is aimed to address a problem that currently allows immigration officials to tear families apart while children are at bus stops, in school, in child care facilities, and other "sensitive locations." We know from years of research that adverse childhood experiences, of which experiencing family separation is one, can disrupt child brain development in their most early years. Though a current internal policy at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) prohibits enforcement at "sensitive locations," we need more than an internal policy that is up to individual agents to uphold. We need federal law that has more weight and accountability. We urge the Oregon Legislature to send a strong message to the U.S. Congress that legislation is needed to codify a prohibition of immigrant enforcement at sensitive locations. Please pass Senate Joint Memorial 1.

Sincerely,

**The Early Childhood Equity Collaborative**

