



Oregon Early Learning Council

700 Summer Street NE, Suite 350

Salem, OR 97301

April 22, 2021

Senator Betsy Johnson, Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, and Representative Dan Rayfield

Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

SUE MILLER
Chair, Early Learning Council

PATRICK ALLEN
Director, Oregon Health Authority

ANGELA BLACKWELL

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*Executive Director,
Oregon Housing and
Community Services*

KALI THORNE LADD

LIESL WENDT
*Deputy Director,
Oregon Department of
Human Services*

MIRIAM CALDERON
*Early Learning
Systems Director*

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and Rayfield:

I am writing as chair of the Early Learning Council to express our support for investing federal rescue funds in child care facilities. As we have all learned during this pandemic, child care is an essential support so that families can work and be part of Oregon's economic recovery. At the same time, child care is also a critical early education service that supports children's current development and future school and life success. Every county in Oregon is a child care desert, which often means that we lack facilities in which these programs can be located. The situation is severe for all children but most severe for infants and toddlers. We need to improve the infrastructure available for child care programs and to address their facility needs, whether by pursuing co-location of child care programs within public housing or other means to support child care facility development and expansion.

While we are fortunate to be receiving specific recovery funds that must be dedicated to child care, that money cannot be used for capital expenses. Child care provides us with educational and economic returns both in the near term and the long term. I respectfully urge your consideration of allocating relief resources for child care facilities.

Thank you for prioritizing young children and their families in Oregon's recovery efforts.

Sincerely,

Sue Miller, Chair
Early Learning Council