



May 3, 2021

Oregon Legislature
House Committee on General Government

Re: SB 299 **IN SUPPORT**

Chair Wilde and Members of the Committee,

Doernbecher
Children's Hospital

School of Medicine
Division of General Pediatrics

**Benjamin Hoffman MD, FAAP
CPST-I**

Professor of Pediatrics
Vice-Chair for Community Health
and Advocacy
Director, Oregon Center for
Children and Youth with
Special Health Needs
Medical Director, Tom Sargent
Safety Center

Mail code: CDRCP
707 SW Gaines Street
Portland, OR 97239-2998
hoffmanb@ohsu.edu
tel 503 494-6513
fax 503 494-1542
www.ohsu.edu

My name is Dr. Ben Hoffman. I am a pediatrician at Doernbecher Children's Hospital, a professor of pediatrics at OHSU, and the Vice Chair for Community Health and Advocacy for the Department of Pediatrics. I am writing to express my strongest support for SB 299 on behalf of the Department of Pediatrics, and of OHSU.

As a pediatrician and as a father of 3, I know first-hand how important it is for children and youth to be engaged in out-of-school activities. Opportunities to play and learn in safe, supportive environments are essential for the development of strong and resilient children. I also know first-hand, how our system has widened inequities based on race and ethnicity, geography and family status due to differential access to such programs, be they after school enrichment, athletics, or summer programs.

SB 299 would establish Children's Service Districts, which would allow communities to make decisions about what is best for their children, with a focus on equity, on academic success, and on meeting the needs of children and families in an authentic, community centered way.

I have a colleague who has said that "Pediatricians are the ultimate witnesses to failed social policy." The absence of supportive, safe and stimulating out of school programs is the result of failed policy, and one that I see impact the families for whom I care every day. Allowing communities the ability to create robust programs that meet the needs of kids and families, are community centered, and funded by the will of the community will benefit all of us, today, tomorrow and well into the future.

It is time we turn our focus to the well-being of children and teens, support hard working parents and caregivers, and to invest in the future for them, and for Oregon. Please vote Yes on SB 299.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ben Hoffman'.

Benjamin Hoffman MD CPST-I FAAP