



May 10, 2021

Paul Andrews High  
Desert ESD

Ben Bergantz, Pacific  
Crest Affordable  
Housing

Lori Colvin, Healthy  
Families of the High  
Desert

Muriel DeLaVergne-  
Brown, Crook County  
Health Department

Rena Gibney,  
Department of Human  
Services

Tamara Harris,  
FQHC/Mosaic Medical

Leticia Hernandez,  
Parent & Diversity Rep.

Amy Howell, COCC

Teresa Martin, The  
Children's Learning  
Center

Lora Nordquist, Bend-  
LaPine School District

Ken Parshall, Jefferson  
County ESD

Tim Rusk, MountainStar  
Family Relief Nursery

Jaylyn Suppah,  
Confederated Tribes of  
Warm Springs

Oscar Tatom, Parent

Diane Tipton, EL-ECSE

Kristen Tobias,  
Pacific Source

Patty Wilson,  
NeighborImpact

**Ex-Officio Members:**

Shannon Lipscomb, OSU  
Cascades

Donna Mills, COHC

House Committee on Health Care  
Oregon Legislature  
900 Court Street NE, Room 453  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 741 Extending enabling Legislation for the Central Oregon Health Council

Chair Prusak, Vice-Chair Hayden, Vice-Chair Salinas and Committee Members,

I am writing today to share the impact and benefit to early childhood services in our Region as a result of the Central Oregon Health Council.

The Early Learning Hub and early childhood organizations have been contributing partners to the structure of the Central Oregon Health Council for the region since inception. As active participants in the development of the Regional Health Assessment and Regional Health Improvement Plan, there has been increased cross sector focus and investment in the prenatal and early childhood years.

The COHC model has facilitated shared risk, investment and reward in early childhood services that include crucial home visiting, developmental screening to services and early literacy and school readiness initiatives for the Region. As a result Central Oregon is well positioned to launch Family Connects Home Visiting Services for all births, has been able to improve the navigation to services as a result of developmental screening for nearly 6,900 children birth to three and launch a highly successful Spanish language early literacy program, Juntos Apprendemos in support of Latinx families across the region. These are just three examples. The Early Learning Hub is proud to stand with the Health Council in the improved health and school readiness benefits for families with young children with a focus on equity and access to services.

This unique structure has demonstrated benefit to the children and families of Central Oregon and we look forward to our continued partnership. Please feel free to reach out with any additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Brenda Comini, Director  
Early Learning Hub of Central Oregon