



February 22, 2021

Rep. Karin Power, Chair
House Committee on Early Childhood
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Power, Vice Chairs Reynolds and Zika, and Members of the Committee,

The Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (THPRD) board of directors would like to express their support for HB 2503, which reforms the ERDC into a child care assistance program that better serves low-income and BIPOC families, as well as providing fair compensation for the child care business owners and educators—predominantly women and BIPOC women—who perform this critical work.

THPRD is the largest special park district in Oregon, spanning 50 square miles and serving about 250,000 residents in and around Beaverton, Oregon. Established over 65 years ago, THPRD's mission is to provide natural areas, high-quality park and recreational facilities, programs, services and natural areas that meet the needs of the diverse communities it serves. We strive to provide all individuals the opportunity to play, learn, and explore, and all employees and volunteers the opportunity to further the district's mission. We do this by removing barriers to participation, fostering an inclusive culture, and offering programs that celebrate the district's diverse population.

THPRD is itself a childcare provider and hosts childcare providers in our facilities. Recognizing the needs of both THPRD staff and the communities we serve, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that every Oregon family should have access to high quality, affordable, and culturally relevant child care, and that every child care provider should be paid a wage that reflects the essential work they do. This is especially true as we know that child care providers are disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and women of color and are among the lowest-paid workers.

THPRD is committed to eliminating the historical inequities of systemic racism, removing barriers to participation, and fostering an inclusive culture. This includes ensuring that the children, parents and families in our district and across Oregon have access to an improved child care system that works for all families. We are also committed to supporting efforts that are cultivated and led by members of the BIPOC community, as is the case with HB 2503. Please join us in supporting this important step in addressing what has become a child care crisis in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ashley Hartmeier-Prigg in black ink.

Ashley Hartmeier-Prigg
THPRD Board President

Handwritten signature of Tya Ping in black ink.

Tya Ping
THPRD Board Secretary

Handwritten signature of Heidi Edwards in black ink.

Heidi Edwards
THPRD Board Secretary Pro-Tem

Handwritten signature of Wendy Kroger in black ink.

Wendy Kroger
THPRD Board Member

Handwritten signature of Felicity Montebianco in black ink.

Felicita Montebianco
THPRD Board Member