



Date: February 15th, 2021

To: House Committee on Early Childhood

Re: OEA support for HB 2503 and HB 3073, Childcare

Chair Power and members of the committee,

The Oregon Education Association represents 41,000 education professionals across the state of Oregon. From early learning to community college, from teachers to professors to education service professionals, OEA's members span the entire spectrum of education. And we support HB 2503 and HB 3073.

Childcare is unaffordable for a working family. To the point that it is detrimental to our society and economy. When it makes more financial sense for a parent to not work because a basic necessity is too expensive, we have a critical crisis. At the same time, while childcare is too expensive for working parents, the providers are not compensated properly either. The average wage for a childcare provider is half the all-industry Oregon average. In fact, over half of childcare providers nationally rely on public benefits to survive.

All this makes childcare a two-pronged crisis. And the most affected folks are Black, Indigenous, other people of color and women.

The national jobs report in December, was clear. All jobs lost in the United States were women's jobs, with women losing 156,000 jobs and men gaining 16,000. The COVID impacts of job loss hit Black and Latinx women more aggressively: between January and December 2020, nearly 2.1 million women left the labor force, including 564,000 Black women and 317,000 Latinas.

The situation is clear. If we do not act now to protect and support the economic wellbeing and agency of women of color now, it will take decades to recover the losses they have sustained.

HBs 2503 and 3073 would realign and streamline our childcares system, and fairly compensate the providers who preform the work. For equity, economic and social reasons OEA urges you to pass them with a "do pass" recommendation.

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