

To: Chair Power, Vice-Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Zika, Members of the House Committee on Human Services

RE: House Bill 4005 – Support

Chair Power, Vice-Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Zika, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is William Miller, I am Blackfeet and Cherokee and I represent the NAYA Action Fund located in Portland, OR. Founded by the community, for the community, NAYA Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization with a mission to expand political advocacy and build electoral power in partnership with the Native community. The NAYA Action Fund provides tools to shape public policy, cultivate leadership, and elect champions for issues impacting Native people. Our vision of systemic change is youth centered, family driven, and elder guided. I write in support of House Bill 4005.

The NAYA Action Fund supports HB 4005 because our communities know that accessing child care is necessary to the success of the families we serve. Child care provides critical infrastructure for Oregon’s essential workforce to continue working, as we’ve seen the devastating impacts on employment when those in our community cannot find childcare. Throughout Oregon 81% of rural communities are designated as child care deserts, which means throughout most of those counties, there are only one third of the amount of childcare slots needed for those who live there.

Despite how prohibitively expensive child care is for parents, child care providers (who are disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and women of color) are among the lowest-paid workers in Oregon. In 2018, the median wage of preschool teachers, many of whom are college-educated, was \$13.95 an hour, and was \$11.86 for child care workers in Oregon. Average annual wages in child care are about half the all-industry Oregon average.¹ This year has made even clearer how essential child care is—it is essential work that makes all other work possible—and yet, we don’t compensate providers accordingly.

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<https://familyforwardoregon.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FFO-Child-Care-Report-2019-REV.pdf>



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Every Oregon family deserves access to high quality, affordable, and culturally relevant child care, and every child care provider should be paid a wage that reflects the essential work they do. On behalf of the NAYA Action Fund, we urge the passage of HB 4005. On behalf of the NAYA Action Fund, we urge the passage of HB 4005.

Thank you,

William Miller
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