

Submitter: Matthew Richardson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Human Services
Measure: HB4117

Testimony in Support of HB 4117
Matthew Richardson
February 3, 2022

Chair Williams, Vice Chairs Ruiz and Sharf, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 4117. My name is Matthew Richardson and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership and Child First.

Nurse-Family Partnership is a nurse home visiting program that has been supporting families in Oregon for over 20 years. This program partners a nurse home visitor with first-time parents who are facing economic and social barriers to help empower these parents to set their families onto a better life course.

HB 4117 would similarly help families access the supports they need to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other credits that can help them build their economic self-sufficiency.

Oregon has taken several important steps already in expanding access to the EITC and other beneficial credits, but the low rates of uptake that persist in the state make it clear that further action is needed. Families face barriers connected to factors such as where they live and the language they speak. The pandemic's isolating and disrupting influence has only added to the burdens borne by already in-need families.

Our current network for culturally specific, culturally responsive, and rural providers is under resourced and in need of expansion and innovation. A sustainable grant program that increases the capacity of these providers is imperative to maximize the EITC take-up rate and improve access to other tax credits and payments available to low-income families. If Oregon were to increase its EITC take-up rate from its current 73.1 percent to the national average of 78.6 percent, low-income families would have access to \$27 million in EITC funds and \$5 million in Child Tax Credit (CTC) Funds annually.

Every Oregon family eligible for these credits deserves access to free tax preparation and navigation resources so they can access these credits. Nurse-Family Partnership urges your support for HB 4117.

Sincerely,

Matthew Richardson

Government Affairs Manager, Northwest

The National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership and Child First