



February 1, 2023

To: Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the American Association of University Women of Oregon (AAUW of OR), we express our strong support for Senate Bill 599.

This bill addresses two critical needs – stable rental housing and childcare. It is not open-ended and provides for limitations that are designed protect the public, landlords, providers and families. Tenants can operate a home-based childcare business only as long as they are certified or registered with the Early Learning Division, they have notified landlords of their plan, and can be required to obtain liability insurance.

The time has come for Oregon to address the problem of "childcare deserts."¹ It is appalling that this phrase accurately describes what parents and caretakers currently face when trying to care for their children. Even when children are receiving childcare services from a provider, data indicate that parents and caretakers are frequently faced with having to find another provider because that childcare provider has closed.

Not only will children benefit by having a place to go when their parents or caretakers are working, but home-based childcare businesses can be started and operated by individuals who might otherwise not be able to earn sufficient income for themselves and their families. These providers are largely women, and many would not be able to work outside the home without adequate childcare. To the extent these businesses can provide or augment incomes for renters, landlords will benefit as well in that they can more confidently rely on payment of rent as it becomes due.

The urgency of the need for childcare options is felt most keenly by families who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, or are immigrants and refugees. These populations are also more likely to live in rental housing.

While this legislation may not entirely address the lack of housing and childcare, it represents a significant step forward for all Oregonians.

Respectfully Submitted,

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¹ Oregon's Child Care Deserts: Mapping Supply By Age, Group, Metropolitan Status, and Percentage of Publicly Funded Slots, prepared for the Oregon Early Learning Division, January, 2019, <https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/early-learners/pdf/oregon-child-care-deserts-01-29-2019.pdf>