



February 20, 2023

To: Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee

Childcare in Oregon is in crisis. There are several bills in this legislative session which are intended to address this crisis. HB 3029 is one of those bills, and **Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW) strongly supports HB 3029.**

HB 3029 directs the newly established Department of Early Learning and Care to “establish and implement a child care provider incentive program for the purpose of assisting child care providers who commit to providing child care to the children”. A key cause of the child care crisis is that child care providers and early childhood educators are embarrassingly underpaid. Many have college loans to repay, have to pay for childcare for their own children, have transportation expenses, and also have to pay for housing. The bottom line is that these providers cannot afford to stay in their chosen fields of childcare and early childhood education.

HB3029 addresses the NOW key issue of:

ECONOMIC JUSTICE: The overwhelming majority of Child Care Providers and Early Childhood Educators are women. Historically, professions that are occupied primarily by women pay less and are undervalued. In the case of childcare, we are asking people to provide nurturing, high quality, consistent, safe care for our children yet barely pay them minimum wages. HB 3029 would partially address this by providing meaningful financial incentives.

Oregon National Organization for Women strongly urges the passage of HB 3029.

Respectfully submitted,

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