



Date: February 20, 2023

To: House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

From: Oregon NOW

Re: Support for HB 2991

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 2991 is one of those bills, and **Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW) strongly supports HB 2991.**

Oregon National Organization for Women (NOW) has an over 40 year history working for equity and justice in our state. We accomplish this by empowering women.

When it comes to childcare the burden of finding high quality, dependable, culturally appropriate care for children more often than not falls on women. If that childcare cannot be found, it is usually the woman who must quit her job or educational pursuits to care for her children. This is often devastating to the family economically. Also, it means interrupting the woman's work history or education so that the opportunity for moving up in her career is stifled.

Childcare is currently in crisis in Oregon. The pandemic resulted in many childcare providers going out of business. The cost of quality childcare has become prohibitive. HB 2991 is designed to address these issues by directing the Department of Early Learning and Care to commission an independent study regarding barriers to attaining high quality early childhood workforce.

Oregon National Organization for Women strongly urges the passage of HB 2991.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Critelli  
President, Oregon NOW  
Legislative Co-Chair, Oregon NOW

Nancy Cook  
Legislative Co-Chair, Oregon NOW