

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Scharf and Nguyen, and members of the House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services!

I write on behalf of Northwest Early Learning Hub in **support of HB 2872**. Northwest Early Learning Hub's mission is to work collaboratively to support coordinated systems that are child-centered, family-friendly, linguistically appropriate and community based to meet the needs of the populations and communities of Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties.

Through Dolly Parton Imagination Library we have been able to offer **64,053 free monthly books to 2,727 children** under age five in Clatsop and Tillamook since August 2018.

Currently NW Early Learning Hub partners with Columbia Pacific CCO to fund and coordinate Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Through Dolly Parton Imagination Library, we are able to efficiently and effectively put books into the homes of young children & their families across our region. Books enhance home literacy environments, increase motivation to read and strengthen bonds between children and caregivers by increasing family interactions. They expose children to a larger and more diverse vocabulary and greater variety of sentence structure helping them achieve school readiness and success in their academic journey. Studies show children that enter kindergarten ready for school have an 82% chance to master basic skills by age 11.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library also serves as a system building strategy for our region. Families who sign up also get access to resources and information we share out via email including preschool and child care opportunities, kindergarten registration, parenting classes and parenting supports. This is the only region wide communication system that allows us to connect directly with families before they register for kindergarten. It has proven to be an invaluable tool in developing our regional early childhood system. Statewide funding would create a sustainable pathway to improve this critical infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Spence
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