



May 30, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures  
From: Our Children Oregon, The Children's Agenda  
RE: Support for HB 3235, Oregon Kids' Credit

Dear Co-Chairs Meek and Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Boquist, Walters, and Reschke, and Members of the committee,

The Children's Agenda, convened by Our Children Oregon, brings together ~130 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the well-being of Oregon's children, youth, and families. Our collective created a 2023 legislative agenda that focuses on community-driven solutions to provide access and opportunities for all children and families. **We write in support of the Oregon Kids' Credit (HB 3235), which is a top priority of the 2023 Children's Agenda.**

Every child in Oregon should be able to grow up economically secure to thrive. As part of the American Rescue Plan in 2021, the Federal Child Tax Credit (CTC) expansion was precisely what Oregon families needed. The temporary expansion helped to ensure families received the assistance they needed during the height of the COVID pandemic, helping families pay for their basic needs like rent, utilities, groceries, clothes, and other essentials. We also saw child poverty nationally drop by nearly half due to this historic relief – the lowest rate on record. The CTC expansion is evidence of what direct cash assistance can do for children and families.

- According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2022 National KIDS COUNT® Data Book, Oregon continues to rank in the *bottom half* of states in economic well-being (30th).<sup>1</sup>
- The Oregon Poverty Measure Project reported that the CTC helped bring 60,000 Oregon children out of poverty.<sup>2</sup>
- Due to the expiration of the federal CTC expansion, an estimated 192,000 Oregon children, and millions more nationwide, have lost access to the full credit.<sup>3</sup>

**Establishing the Oregon Kids' Credit (HB 3235) will help families with young children make ends meet and reduce financial stress.** This refundable state tax credit would be the most beneficial way of delivering resources to families and alleviating many of the economic stressors of raising a child. Analysis by the Oregon Center for Public Policy shows that the Oregon Kids' Credit would help children in every county and every corner of Oregon, but

<sup>1</sup> <https://ourchildrenoregon.org/2022-kids-count-national-report-and-oregon-state-data-cards-release/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/research/groups/poverty/pdf/oprm-early-findings-draft-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-tax/year-end-tax-policy-priority-expand-the-child-tax-credit-for-the-19-million>

especially children in rural Oregon and Black, Indigenous, and Latinx children. Evidence shows that direct cash, like the Oregon Kids' Credit, will provide long-term benefits in advancing equity and lead to overall better health for children, increased stability, and elevated success in school.

**Oregon families need the Oregon Kids' Credit.** The Children's Agenda strongly supports HB 3235 to create a refundable tax credit of \$1,200 per eligible child per year to help Oregon families most in need. Children and families across Oregon are struggling with economic insecurity, made worse by rising prices. Creating the Oregon Kids' Credit would be an effective and efficient way to deliver resources to families in greatest need and help reduce child poverty in Oregon.

As advocates for children, it is vital to continue supporting families with the financial relief and urgently needed assistance that the Oregon Kids' Credit can provide. We thank you for your time and efforts in taking the necessary steps to end economic hardship and build a life of economic security for our children. They deserve to thrive in every aspect of their life. We urge your support for HB 3235.

Sincerely,

Our Children Oregon  
Oregon Center for Public Policy  
APANO  
Catholic Community Services  
Children's Institute  
Clackamas Women's Services  
Coalition of Communities of Color  
Community Action Team, Inc.  
FACT Oregon  
Families First Parent Resource  
Family Forward Oregon  
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids  
Friends of Outdoor School  
IRCO  
Neighborhood Partnerships

Oregon Alliance of YMCAs  
Oregon Association of Relief  
Oregon CASA Network  
Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials  
Oregon Resource Family Alliance  
Oregon Food Bank  
Oregon Hunger Task Force  
Oregon Kids Read  
Oregon Primary Care Association  
Oregon PTA  
Oregon School-Based Health Alliance  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon  
Pro-Choice Oregon  
Washington County Kids

*[View the 2023 Children's Agenda: www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2023-childrens-agenda/](http://www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2023-childrens-agenda/)*