



256 Warner Milne Road, Oregon City, OR 97045
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February 5, 2023

Re: Support for Summer Learning (HB 4082):

- *\$50 million for Summer 2024 to support the partnerships between our School Districts, Education Service Districts, Tribal Nations, Counties, Cities, Libraries, and community organizations.*

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Hudson and Wright, and Members of the House Committee on Education,

On behalf of Clackamas Women's Services (CWS), we are pleased to submit testimony in support of Summer Learning (HB 4082) creating funding of \$50 million to support the partnerships between School Districts, Education Service Districts, Tribal Nations, Counties, Cities, Libraries, and community organizations and create a workgroup to continue the dialogue on future mid- and long-term summer programs and recommend a high-quality, sustainable state-funded Summer Learning plan.

The mission of Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) is to break the isolation of domestic and sexual violence. Incorporated in 1985 as Clackamas County's first domestic violence shelter, CWS is a community-based organization providing comprehensive, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed services to survivors of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, elder and vulnerable adult abuse, human trafficking, exploitation, and stalking. We provide violence prevention education to over 25 schools in Clackamas County for over 6,000 students. Additionally, we provide summer learning opportunities for youth who have witnessed or experienced family violence through our Camp HOPE America – Oregon program, which provides a weeklong summer camp and yearlong mentoring program.

The enrichment activities provided through the Camp HOPE program include skits and camp songs, arts and crafts, water activities such as kayaking and rafting, ropes courses, and horseback riding. Participants also engage in curriculum and discussion that promotes healing and connection.

Youth who have witnessed or experienced domestic violence are at a higher risk for behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. And traumatic experiences within their families can create additional worries and stresses. The activities and curriculum offered has profound importance and value for the youth who participate.

CWS has previously received state funding for Camp HOPE programming, supporting the youth whose lives have been affected by violence. This programming is crucial to recovery from trauma. We know firsthand that young people need to have more time to learn and engage with trusted, caring adults and building connections with each other. The impact is embodied in one quote from a camp participant last year, "In the future when I have to do hard things, I'm going to look back on this moment and remember that if I can finish this climb, I can do it."

Community-based domestic and sexual violence programs intersect with many state systems. In our community, we have built collaborations with law enforcement, schools, healthcare providers, the criminal justice system, social services agencies, and many other community partners. Camp HOPE is a collaborative effort of many of these partners to bring a holistic experience to camp participants. We fully support the effort to increase collaboration and partnerships between School Districts, Education Service Districts, Tribal Nations, Counties, Cities, Libraries, and community organizations like ours.

In closing, a statewide Summer Learning program will foster success for all Oregon's students by improving readiness to learn, promoting academic achievement, and providing safe, healthy, and enriching ways to grow as individuals during the summer months. Recent studies have demonstrated that Summer Learning reduces learning loss, accelerates learning, and addresses equity issues by narrowing the achievement gaps between socio-economic groups.

For the above reasons, we hope you will support Summer Learning 2024 (HB 4082). Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melissa Erlbaum".

Melissa Erlbaum
Executive Director