Submitter: Dana Hepper

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure: SB1542

My name is Dana Hepper, and I am the Director of Policy & Advocacy for the Children's Institute. Our vision is an Oregon where all children have the love, care, and education they need. The passage of the Student Success Act in 2019 made meaningful headway on this vision. With the ~$200 million annually that goes to the Early Learning Account (ELA) of the Student Success Act, Oregon makes critical investments in the love, care and education of young children age 0-5. This Account provided the first funding for the Early Childhood Equity Fund to support culturally specific services to get children ready for Kindergarten. ELA expanded access to quality preschool for thousands of children through Preschool Promise and Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten/ Head Start. This funding supports families to stay together and build their parenting skills through Healthy Families Oregon home visiting, Relief Nurseries, and parenting education. Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education services for infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities and delays were funded at the recommended adequate services levels from 2020-2023 with these funds. And Oregon finally had dedicated resources to build workforce pipelines and support for this sector. Five years in, and a global pandemic later, this work feels like it is finally catching hold and making a significant difference. It is not the time to take our foot off the gas for Oregon's youngest children.

Finally, as the wife of a small business owner whose annual income is between $1 and $5 million and who pays this Corporate Activities Tax, the structure of the tax is very workable for his business. It has not caused undo hardship or a need to raise rates for clients. He works in a staff-heavy industry, and the carve-out for some payroll expenses has been effective for ensuring the impact of the CAT on his business is manageable.

Thank you for your consideration.