

Submitter:

Margaret Henry

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2682

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Oregon House Bill 2682, which seeks to increase funding for early intervention services for children with developmental delays and disabilities. This legislation is vital for enhancing educational outcomes and improving the health of communities across Oregon.

Early intervention is essential for supporting the developmental needs of children. Research shows that the first few years of life are critical for brain development, and timely access to services can lead to significant improvements in cognitive, social, and emotional skills. According to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2020), effective early intervention can yield substantial gains in developmental outcomes.

The educational benefits of early intervention are well-documented. The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) (2021) reports that children receiving early intervention services are significantly more likely to enter school ready to learn compared to their peers who do not receive such support. Specifically, early intervention can increase school readiness by up to 40%, which is particularly relevant in Oregon, where approximately 12% of kindergarteners are unprepared for the classroom.

Furthermore, studies indicate that children who participate in early intervention programs tend to achieve higher educational attainment, including high school graduation and post-secondary education (Guralnick, 2011). Supporting House Bill 2682 will ensure that more children in Oregon develop the foundational skills necessary for academic success, contributing to a more skilled workforce.

Investing in early intervention services also leads to significant health benefits. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) highlight that early intervention can reduce the prevalence of behavioral and mental health issues among children. A report from the Oregon Health Authority (2022) indicates that children receiving early intervention services experience a notable decrease in emergency room visits for behavioral health concerns.

Additionally, the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (2021) states that for every dollar invested in early intervention, states can save up to \$6 in future costs associated with special education and healthcare. This reinforces the necessity of increasing funding for early intervention services, benefiting individual children and alleviating the strain on community resources.

The relationship between increased funding for early intervention and improved outcomes is well-established. Research indicates that states allocating more resources to these services see measurable improvements in educational achievement. A study by the RAND Corporation (2020) emphasizes that strategic

investments in early childhood programs yield high returns in enhanced educational performance and reduced long-term societal costs.

By increasing funding as proposed in House Bill 2682, Oregon can ensure that all children have access to the support they need to thrive. This investment is not merely an expenditure; it is a commitment to the future of Oregon's children and communities.

In conclusion, Oregon House Bill 2682 represents a critical investment in our children's future and the health of our communities. The evidence is compelling: increasing funding for early intervention services will lead to improved educational outcomes and healthier communities throughout Oregon. I urge you to support House Bill 2682 and prioritize the well-being of our youngest citizens.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.