

To: House Committee on Early Childhood & Human Services
From: Kate M.
Date: February 20, 2025
RE: In Support of HB 2452

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, Members of the Committee:

My name is Kate and I am a parent of two children, ages 12 & 16, a teacher of 26 years with the last 15 years as an infant & toddler provider. As a resident of Oregon, I am writing today to express my strong support for House Bill 2452.

As both a parent and provider of education and care to our youngest citizens and their families I know first hand the importance of childcare as part of the machinery of a healthy economy and of healthy family units. With children at the heart of what motivates my work I say with complete assuredness that when parents and caregivers do better, children do better. I see this bill as ultimately being about relationships. It is about connecting people to dependable, high quality care so families have a shot at being able to thrive thus creating a positive ripple effect for all Oregonians.

Despite the intentions of 211, referrals, etc., too many parents are struggling to find affordable and reliable options that align with their work schedules and their children's unique needs. The resulting hardships are many and have long lasting effects. Adults have to turn down job opportunities missing out on gains in financial security and/or job satisfaction. Children get put in compromised situations impacting their safety and right to be lovingly and knowledgeably supported in their development. Adults and children live with added stress which has many negative physical and mental health implications. The long term costs of these negative impacts are enormous and avoidable.

That's why I believe that child care resource and referral directors (CCRRs) are essential in helping families access quality child care. CCRRs provide a vital service by connecting parents with vetted providers, offering guidance and coaching on evaluating care options, and supporting parents at a community level in navigating the complex child care system.

House Bill 2452 will enable CCRRs to expand their services and better support families. By providing grants to CCRRs, this bill will help ensure that:

- More families have access to quality child care
- Parents receive the support they need to make informed decisions about their children's care
- Child care providers are held to high standards, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for our children

In conclusion, I urge you to support House Bill 2452. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of Oregon families like mine and those I have served over the years. By investing in CCRRs, we can ensure that all parents have access to the resources they need to provide their children with a strong foundation for success.

Thank you for considering my testimony.
Sincerely,

Kate M.