



Child Care That Works. For Every Family.

To: House Committee on Early Childhood & Human Services

From: Child Care for Oregon

Date: February 20, 2025

RE: In Support of HB 2452

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, members of the committee:

My name is Kelly Mehigan and I am a mother in Portland . As a resident of Oregon, I am here today to express my strong support for House Bill 2452.

As a parent], I have faced significant challenges in finding quality child care that meets the needs of my family.. Even before my child was born, we were actively looking for childcare because Portland is a childcare desert. From very early in my pregnancy we had been told in the Portland area that there is a lack of available childcare. I had been told specifically by providers that there is a lack of infant care and that care will be hard to find and we might not make it off a waitlist. The cost of childcare, the lack of available providers with quality care, and the inaccessibility of the current child care infrastructure, which makes it harder for providers to create available space, created real stress for me during my pregnancy.

After my child was born a friend actually provided the referral that got us a placement at an in home center. We love having our daughter there, but it is incredibly expensive and she will age out of the program at 3 years old.

That's why I believe that child care resource and referral directors (CCRRs) are essential in helping families like mine 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 us in navigating the complex child care system.

House Bill 2452 will enable CCRRs to expand their services and better support families like mine. 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



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- Child care providers are held to high standards, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for our children

If HB 2452 passes, I believe that my family will directly benefit from the expanded services offered by CCRRs. Specifically, because childcare is a fundamental right and basic need. It supports all other work, we can show up to our jobs and perform well knowing our children are looked after in safe, quality care. Without it families are stuck, careers stunted, children missing out on opportunities to connect, grow and learn with their peers. If my own children and my community's children have expanded access to childcare then a basic need of ours is being met, which makes my community and family safer and happier. I know that I will reap the benefits of expanded access both personally and relationally with my fellow Oregonians.

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. 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,

Kelly Mehigan