

Submitter: Maureen Hinman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2958

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maureen Hinman and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon School-Based Health Alliance. I respectfully submit this testimony in support of House Bill 2958 to renew and strengthen Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit.

In our work to support youth by developing K-12 school health services, we often engage in a community engagement process where we hear from school staff, community providers, students, and parents about the health needs that they face. While we typically hear about things like lack of access to healthcare, we also consistently hear about social determinants of health, almost all of which have roots in poverty. Working families across Oregon are struggling with economic insecurity, made worse by rising prices. The most direct way to address this is to give these families more money to afford rent, food, and other basic needs. Strengthening Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit would be an effective and efficient way to deliver resources to families struggling to make ends meet.

Without legislative action this session, Oregon's EITC will sunset. HB 2958 not only renews Oregon's EITC but, importantly, makes much-needed improvements to strengthen it. HB 2958 more than doubles the match of the federal credit provided by the state, better helping working families meet the rising cost of living; it expands eligibility to all childless workers regardless of their age, better helping younger Oregonians entering the workforce and those working past 65 make ends meet; and makes technical improvements to allow the state to pay the EITC out in regular advance payments in the future.

Policies like the Earned Income Tax Credit have been shown to lead to a long list of positive impacts on families, and result in cost savings in other systems. This is related to improved child well-being, enhanced educational outcomes, and more.

I urge you to support Oregon's young people and their families, and advance HB 2958.

Sincerely,
Maureen Hinman