



Oregon Early Learning Hub Association

Convener • Connector • Capacity Builder • Champion

February 24, 2025

Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: Support for SB 694

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health:

Oregon's 16 Early Learning Hubs blanket the state and convene, connect, and capacity-build the services and supports for families during the critical period starting prenatally through age five.

We have a front-row view of the poverty experienced by too many Oregon families with young children, and we are acutely aware of the costs incurred downstream when these families are unable to meet their basic needs, including, but not limited to, food and housing.

We know many of the poor outcomes we're currently seeing in healthcare and education are the result of the instability during the critical early years of a child's life. The progress proposed in SB 694 is the absolute bare minimum we must do to make progress on Oregon's goals of improving health equity, literacy scores, and incarceration rates.

A tax credit of \$1,200 may come close to covering the cost of formula for one year, as an example, which [studies](#) show costs between \$760 and \$2,280. It does not come close to covering the estimated costs of breastfeeding which is shown to cost some families several thousands of dollars in equipment and lost wages. This does not address the other innumerable costs associated with caring for young children, including food, housing, clothing, and transportation.

This investment is preventative and will ensure savings in education, social services, and justice, in the long term. Supporting families with the necessities will allow family serving organizations to focus on issues other than emergency situations to support a better quality of life longer term.

Oregon's Early Learning Hubs urge your support of SB 694.

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