

Submitter: Hilary Nichols

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB694

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

For the record my name is Hilary Nichols. I live and work in SE Portland, and am a mom to a beautiful 3 year old child. When my baby was born three years ago, our expenses skyrocketed. We lost half of our family's income due to my wife being medically unable to return to work, and our baby was born during the incredibly stressful formula shortage, during which it could cost up to \$30 or \$40 dollars for a single canister. Add to this the cost of infant childcare, healthcare, clothing, diapers, car seats, and more.

For those of you on this committee who are parents, or have children in your lives, you already know and feel this deeply. When you have a kid in your care, you need money to take care of them. This is why I urge you to support SB 694, which will modify the child tax credit by increasing the maximum amount of the credit and increasing income limits. What is most exciting about SB 694 is that someone making minimum wage would qualify for the full Oregon Kids Credit, which is not the case under the current policy.

We know child poverty leads to worse health outcomes, including low birthweight, infant mortality, social emotional and language development, nutrition, chronic illness, environmental exposure, and injury. I envision a world in which the words "Child" and "Poverty" never go together, and I believe SB 694 is an important step for Oregon to realize that vision.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony, and thank you for your service to make a healthier Oregon.