

February 25, 2025

TO: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
FROM: Grace Fortson, Our Children Oregon
SUBJECT: Support for SB 695

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Grace Fortson, I am the Policy and Advocacy Manager with Our Children Oregon (OCO). OCO is a statewide nonprofit committed to whole child wellbeing through the Children's Agenda- a comprehensive legislative agenda created and supported by our over 135 member organizations across the state.

I am here to represent not only my own personal support of Momnibus, but also the support of our entire Children's Agenda coalition who voted to prioritize these bills as a key way to support children and families this legislative session.

Working in a coalition is such an amazing experience. Everyday, I get to connect folks with expertise in taxes with childcare experts with people who hold lived experience with everyone in between. It is incredible to see what we can accomplish together toward the goal of whole-child wellbeing. This is part of why we are in strong support of SB 695 as it encourages collaborative approaches that are already in place in Oregon through focus on CCOs and Early Learning Hubs.

Research shows that CCOs already demonstrate improved outcomes in prenatal care access as well as reduction in adverse infant health outcomes¹. Because this is already such a promising practice in Oregon, **we strongly urge support of SB 695** in order to further improve the wellbeing of children and parent health.

Thank you,

Grace Fortson, Policy and Advocacy Manager, Our Children Oregon

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¹<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6863224/#:~:text=CCOs%20have%20been%20shown%20to%20improve%20access.health%20outcomes%2C%20such%20as%20low%20birthweight%20and>