

Submitter: Junyu Johnson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5514

Written Testimony for DELC Budget (SB 5514)

Submitted by: Junyu, Education Services Manager, Clackamas County Children's Commission

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Junyu, and I serve as the Education Services Manager at Clackamas County Children's Commission. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed funding of \$387.843 million for Oregon's Head Start programs, as outlined in the DELC Budget (SB 5514).

Head Start programs have been a cornerstone of early childhood education for nearly 60 years, providing high-quality, free preschool education to children ages 3-4. These programs are essential in supporting the language, literacy, and emotional development of our youngest learners. At Clackamas County Children's Commission, we see firsthand the transformative impact that Head Start has on children and families in our community.

The funding we are requesting is crucial to maintaining the existing services that Head Start programs offer. This includes not only educational support but also comprehensive services such as nutrition, health care, and family engagement. Our programs ensure that children are well-nourished, healthy, and ready to learn, which sets them on a path to success in school and beyond.

Head Start programs serve some of the most vulnerable populations in our state. Eligible children come from families earning less than 100 percent of the federal poverty level, those who are homeless, in foster care, or receiving TANF, SSI, or SNAP benefits. Early Head Start extends these critical services to children from birth to age 3, providing early learning and family support services that are vital for low-income families.

One of the key strengths of Head Start is its emphasis on the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher. Our programs provide parents with the tools and opportunities to support their child's educational development and to advance their own education and job training. This holistic approach not only benefits the child but also strengthens the entire family unit.

With the current uncertainty at the federal level, state support for Head Start has never been more critical. The requested funding will allow us to continue providing these essential services without significant budget cuts, ensuring that every eligible family has the opportunity to enroll their child in a local Head Start program.

I urge you to support the proposed funding for Head Start programs in the DELC Budget (SB 5514). Your investment in early childhood education will have a lasting positive impact on the children and families of Oregon. To help us to build the trauma

informed high quality care for children and families!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Junyu

Education Services Manager

Clackamas County Children's Commission