

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

**RE: Child and Adult Care Food Program (HB 3201)**

Chair Hartman, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and members of the committee,

**In 2025, providers, families, and advocates from across Oregon call on the Legislature to choose children.** Proactive investments in early childhood services can break cycles of poverty and ensure long-term stability for children and families across the state. When we choose children, we improve people's lives and bend the cost curve on spending driven by crises. Prioritizing children builds a more just and promising future for Oregon.

**Investing in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a key way to support children.** This federal nutrition program provides essential reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children in child care . CACFP is proven to promote healthy nutrition, enhance the quality of child care, stabilize the income and services of child care providers, and support local farmers and food processors.

Access to nutritious food is crucial for early childhood development. Unfortunately, as many as 1 in 6 children are food insecure, with children of color experiencing food insecurity at 2-3 times higher rates. The current federal reimbursement rate is not keeping pace with the rising cost of food, forcing providers to either pay out of pocket or pass the costs onto families.

HB 3201 seeks to address these issues by:

- Adding 10 cents reimbursement to eligible meals and snacks.
- Bringing Tier 2 home-based providers up to the same reimbursement level as Tier 1 providers. Currently, home-based providers receive different reimbursement rates depending on their location, despite the uniform cost of food.

- Providing one-time funds of \$250,000 to Oregon State University to create culturally specific menus based on USDA guidelines.
- Maintaining the \$660,000 allocated during the 2024 session to provide supplemental administrative funding for home based sponsoring organizations to help ensure statewide coverage- enhancing supports for home based providers (SB 5515).

When children are centered in decision-making and programs are intentionally designed to meet the needs of those with the most barriers to opportunity, early childhood investments have the power to improve outcomes for all children. **We urge your support for HB 3201 to ensure our children receive the nutritious food they need, support childcare providers, and help local economies thrive.**

Sincerely,

211Info

Adelante Mujeres

APANO Communities United Fund

Ballmer Institute

Children's Institute

FACT Oregon

Happy Go Lucky Child Care

Families First Child Care Center

IRCO

Irene's Family Child Care

Juniper Berry Playgarden

Metropolitan Family Service

Morning Song Playgarden

Neighborhood House

Northwest Regional ESD

Nurse Family Partnership

Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries

ORAEYC

Oregon Head Start Association  
Our Children Oregon  
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon  
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon  
Reach Out & Read  
Southern Oregon Early Learning Services  
Yamhill Community Care  
First Children's Finance  
Eastern Oregon Early Learning Hub  
Quality Care Connections  
Child Care Partners Child Care Resource & Referral  
Oregon Partners for Education Justice  
Bumble Preschool and Childcare  
Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force  
Heather's Daycare  
Candyland Daycare  
Candy Clinkenbeard  
Bunny Trails Child Care  
Community Action Partnership of Oregon (CAPO)