

Co-Chairs Sollman and Ruiz, Members of the Committee,

My name is Abbey Lutskovsky. I come before you as a working mom of three children, as well as an Early Learning Coordinator who supports an Early Learning Hub and a Parenting Education Hub in Northwestern Oregon. I am here today in support of HB 5514, DELC's budget bill.

Early Learning Hubs across Oregon work to get to know our regions so we can improve collaboration and coordination between all the sectors and programs supporting young children and their families. Hubs help ensure that the system is greater than the sum of its parts.

This is what I know about my region:

- 1) My region includes Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook County. In this area, DELC actively funds Healthy Families, OPK, Preschool Promise, and CCR&R as well as us, as the Early Learning and Parenting Education Hub.
- 2) I also know that 360 families in our region are enrolled in DELC's ERDC program while 230 families remain on the waitlist. Continued investment in ERDC is important to families and to our local economy.
- 3) Our local CCR&R is doing critical work to implement the Every Child Belongs suspension and expulsion prevention program. They need continued investment to implement the plans they've spent over a year developing in partnership with our communities.

I also want to quickly call-out the need for investment in Early Literacy as outlined in the Governor's Recommended Budget.

The Birth-to-five Literacy Plan funded efforts through the Early Learning Hubs in this biennium. Using those funds, we have partnered with ODHS to install Little Free Libraries at 3 ODHS offices, with plans to add 3 more by the end of the year. Research shows that Little Free Libraries expand home libraries and increase children's reading frequency. I could name other projects as well, but will not for the sake of brevity. They are posted on OLIS.

As a parenting education hub, we were also able to leverage those funds to promote early literacy. We recently supported two community partners to become Abriendo Puertas facilitators. They will deliver Abriendo Puertas, an evidence-based Spanish-language parenting education program in Clatsop County. The program helps parents build their skills as advocates and teachers.

With continued investment, we could expand this work. We have a vision for promoting and embedding early literacy all across the region with the long-term goal of improving third-grade reading scores.

In closing, I want to point out how important DELC is to me, as a mom. My youngest child attends a Certified Family Child Care program. Knowing that my providers are listed in the

Central Background Registry and monitored by the Child Care Licensing Division gives me the peace of mind to participate in the workforce every single day.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify - I urge your support of this critical funding.