

March 6, 2025

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

From: BuildUp Oregon

Re: **Support SB 5514, Funding for Department of Early Learning and Care**

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

BuildUp Oregon is a coalition of four Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) selected by Oregon Housing and Community Services to simultaneously address the affordable housing and childcare shortages throughout Oregon by providing funding and technical assistance to childcare facilities co-located with affordable housing. We currently have 26 projects in our pipeline and will be making our first awards this spring.

BuildUp Oregon supports SB 5514. The Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) provides essential support to parents, caregivers, and childcare providers. Parents and caregivers need the access to quality, affordable childcare that subsidy programs like Head Start, Preschool Promise, and Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) provide. Without these subsidies, families will not be able to afford childcare, and Oregon will have invested millions in early care and education facilities that will be under-utilized.

DELIC is one of multiple state agencies with interrelated and mutually supportive programs through which the Oregon legislature invests in young children and their families. While there is understandable pressure to fund visible crises like addiction and homelessness, we urge the legislature to also invest in the foundational and upstream supports that we know help young children grow into healthy, thriving adults. The supports that DELIC's programs provide are vital early interventions that contribute to the long-term stability of Oregonians and our economy. Continued investment in childcare workforce development, facilities, and subsidies are needed to ensure that families have access to quality, affordable childcare. As you consider SB 5514 and other funding requests related to childcare, BuildUp Oregon asks that you take into consideration the need for investments in each of these interdependent areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Rachel Langford  
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