

Date: March 18, 2025

To: Chair Reynolds and members of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

From: Judy Newman, Strategic Advisor, Early Childhood Hub of Lane County

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 1167

My name is Judy Newman and I am here from the Early Childhood Hub of Lane County. I testified today in support of SB 1167. As someone who has worked in early childhood for MANY years it is thrilling to be part of an initiative that starts at the beginning of the journey with pregnant moms and continues through the first 2 years of the infant's life and early parenting. As we know, these first years are the most formative for brain development, bonding and future social emotional and physical health. And this is where we must start!

In Lane County we gathered information from families and providers from all service sectors who work with moms and babies both during pregnancy and after birth through age 2. We quickly learned that there is no one perfect offering-- each family needs something different to support them and those needs often change over time. We also learned assistance is siloed AND takes extensive documentation and persistence to access each one....but time and focus are typically in short supply during those months of pregnancy and the first years of sleep deprived parents.

Based on what we have learned and research we have done we decided that we would provide monthly low barrier cash assistance to enable pregnant and parenting moms the flexibility to address needs as they arise. \$1500 during pregnancy and \$500 a month for the first 2 years of the infants life. This is similar to RXKids in Flint Michigan that you have heard about recently. We plan to track the impact on a parent's stress and confidence in parenting, child outcomes and how the funds are spent to better understand the needs of families.

We will also ensure that new moms receive a safe, ergonomic front carrier if they do not have one and would like one And how to use it. Front carriers promote bonding in a simple, proven and practical way. On the next page are some pictures of examples to my testimony.

Thank you for your time and attention to learning about these "upstream" strategies aimed at improving long term outcomes for children. I urge you to support SB 1167.

If you need any additional information do not hesitate to contact me,
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