

Submitter: Marah Cook
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1167

Honorable Senators and Staff,

My name is Marah Cook, and I am a resident of Multnomah County. I am writing to express my full support for SB1167, which proposes to allocate critical funding and resources to support families and ensure the healthy development of children in Oregon during the crucial first 1,000 days of life.

As a mother myself, I cannot stress enough how important resources like these are for pregnant and birthing families, and families with young children. Pregnancy through infancy and toddlerhood are THE MOST CRITICAL times for brain development. If we want the children of the future, our future citizens, to start with their best feet forward, then supporting this bill is a no brainer. Children are our future, and if we want a bright one, then we must invest in supporting children and families in the earliest stages for the health and happiness of our communities.

This bill provides vital funding through the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for distribution to seven key entities across the state. These investments will strengthen early childhood development, maternal health, and family support programs, addressing disparities and ensuring equitable access to care. SB1167 supports the development of a birthing village and critical care services for getting the right start for families where care deserts exist.

Funding for the first 1,000 days of a child's life (from conception to age two) is crucial because it's a critical period for brain development, laying the foundation for lifelong health and well-being, and addressing issues like malnutrition and poverty.

These investments are essential for improving maternal and infant health outcomes, reducing disparities, and ensuring families receive the support they need. As a (parent, doula, healthcare provider, community advocate—if applicable), I have seen firsthand how critical these resources are in shaping the health and well-being of Oregon's children and families.

Studies show that countries that fail to invest in the well-being of women and children in the first 1,000 days lose billions of dollars to lower economic productivity and higher health costs. It is why several of the world's leading economists have called for greater investments in the nutrition and well-being of mothers, babies, and toddlers as a way to create brighter and more prosperous futures for us all.

Explore the Research

I urge you to support SB1167 and make this investment in our state's future. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Marah Cook

Portland citizen, mother of two