

Date: 3/24/2025

Subject: CARE testimony/HB 2374

Good morning committee members,

Thank you for your time and consideration for HB 2374. My name is Mayra Vorhauer I serve the community of Milton-Freewater as a CARE coordinator, my salary is paid through a special contract through IMESD however I follow the CARE model and work with the Umatilla county CARE program.

Since starting this role in July I feel that I have learned and grown so much. Working alongside the Umatilla county CARE specialist has been an incredibly enriching experience. There is so much to the roles that we hold in the communities we serve I feel incredibly privileged to be able help families in the ways we do. We are welcomed into so many realms of families lives and even on the days that we can't provide an answer or the answer folks are hoping for, our clients are always happy to have had our help. From time to time I also get referrals from CPS, for families they are working with.

In Milton-Freewater I have helped families from all walks of life starting with women who are starting their journey's as mothers to the very end of life and being there for a high school student who's father passed away after a long battle with cancer and everything in between. I have had a mom arrive at my office a few days after giving birth seeking help because she knew I work with a friend of hers. I have helped families connect with the diaper bank at the Pendleton WIC office, I do this by working with the WIC employees to either request they bring them to their Milton-Freewater office or I go pick them up. This was a huge need over the winter as most of my clients utilizing this resource are seasonal agricultural workers typically having very limited funding through the winter months.

A lot of my clients are monolingual speaking Spanish only which is a huge barrier for their families. For my Spanish speaking families, I spend a lot of time helping them scheduling appointments helping with applications and other types of paperwork. Even when families get written material in their preferred language they still seek my help understanding if they need to take any additional steps. There are a lot of systems and agencies that we work with that do not provide written information in any other languages making it impossible for these families to make informed decisions. I also help families in the schools. I meet with school staff at all the different schools regularly to discuss our student's needs. I

collaborate with school counselors to identify unmet needs or growth opportunities for the families I work with.

In closing CARE works closely with school staff to assist families of students who are chronically absent from school. All of our work is focused on helping children and families thrive in their communities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mayra Vorhauer

CARE Coordinator