



April 9, 2025

To: Co-chair Senator Kate Leiber and Co-Chair Representative Tawna Sanchez and Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means.

Re: 2025 Statewide Budget Priorities at Community Budget Hearings

For the record, my name is Danno Flippo. I live and work in Oregon's Senate District 3 and House District 5. I am submitting testimony in support of the [investments identified by the Early Childhood Coalition](#), especially early literacy services such as those provided by Reach Out and Read to 87,000 Oregon families each year. Reach Out and Read partners directly with pediatric clinicians to help build foundations for school and life success by supporting early literacy and healthy relationships through parent-child shared reading.

As a program manager for Reach Out and Read, I see medical staff light up talking about how children and parents connect over the new developmentally appropriate book given to them at each well-child exam. I see clinics go the extra mile to welcome children in waiting areas with gently used books, familiar cartoons and stickers at eye level, and offering fun games like hopscotch. Our passionate and skilled state team works directly with clinics to track program quality metrics, ensure timely book delivery, and support collaboration with community partners like libraries.

The Early Childhood Coalition recognizes you face significant uncertainty this budget cycle. In these circumstances, it is critical the state makes strategic investments that provide needed opportunity for families to thrive in difficult times. Early experiences have a profound and lasting impact on brain development and life outcomes. According to Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman, investments in young children are the most cost-effective use of public dollars with the greatest return. Investing in early childhood services and programs improves people's lives. Given the unpredictable nature of the federal budget, we urge you to stay the course and not make any preemptive cuts to services.

Please include the \$25 million for early literacy as described in POP 580 so that the Department of Early Learning and Care's [Birth Through Five Literacy Plan](#) can be fully realized. This plan has three main goals:

- to increase access to culturally specific early literacy programs for children from birth to age five,
- provide training and coaching for direct service staff in early literacy, and
- to develop and expand language revitalization efforts by federally recognized Indian Tribes in Oregon.

I also urge you to ensure funding for the Child and Adult Food Care Program and for Maternal-Child Health programming. Working together we can help ensure all Oregon children have a strong start in life.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my written testimony.

Sincerely,

*Danno Flippo*

Danno Flippo  
Program Manager, Reach Out and Read

## OREGON

P.O. Box 14461 | Portland, OR | 97293  
971-287-6942  
[www.reachoutandread.org/oregon](http://www.reachoutandread.org/oregon)

## WASHINGTON

2400 NW 80th Street #315 | Seattle, WA | 98117  
206-524-3579  
[www.reachoutandread.org/washington](http://www.reachoutandread.org/washington)