



From The Office Of Rep Jules Walters

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Rep Jules Walters Leading Effort To Increase Access To Child Care In Oregon

Legislation Rep Walters introduced this session seeks to establish a child care infrastructure grant program that would match federal money and improve access to child care in Oregon.

Salem, OR – On Tuesday, the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business heard testimony in support of [HB 4098](#), legislation introduced by Rep Jules Walters (D-West Linn & Tualatin), a mother who has experienced barriers to accessing child care for her own family. The bill would create a fund that would leverage federal money to bolster child care programs in Oregon.

“Currently, every county in Oregon is considered a ‘Childcare Desert,’ which means that for every open child care slot, there are up to ten children who need it,” said **Rep. Jules Walters (D-West Linn & Tualatin)**. “As a mother of four, I understand the struggle to find accessible child care. I know that Oregon’s workforce is only as strong as its child care sector, and child care is the backbone of our nation’s economy.”

The CHIPS Act guidance pushes applicants to address both supply and demand constraints in their communities by investing in child care capacity development strategies. Oregon is in a unique position to meet these requirements by further investing in existing programs and supports for growing child care supply.

During the public hearing today in Salem, legislators heard about the real life impact this would make for families not just in West Linn, but across Oregon.

“We must ensure that Oregon’s businesses have the best case possible to win these grant dollars, and that we are appropriately growing and maintaining our workforce to meet the future demand as we build

CHIPS facilities. With HB 4098, we can set businesses up for success in receiving CHIPS grants, grow, and maintain our workforce by strengthening access to affordable, accessible childcare,” **said Rep. Hai Pham (D- South Hillsboro & SW Beaverton).**

“I’m excited to be a chief sponsor to House Bill 4089, childcare is a necessity as we build intergenerational wealth, and we’ve heard from communities across Oregon. The state must pass bold, and innovative policies that address the growing child care gaps,” **said Rep. Ricki Ruiz (D- Gresham)**

A compelling component of the legislation is how it would draw down federal dollars, making it a fiscally thoughtful solution. This legislation would ensure that Oregon has reliable community infrastructure in place so that all community members will have the support and resources they need in order to be successful.

If passed out of the policy committee, it will go to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

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