

# THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF WARM SPRINGS RESERVATION OF OREGON

Health and Human Services Administration  
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March 9, 2015

The Honorable Betty Komp and Rod Monroe  
Co-Chairs, Joint Ways & Means Sub-Committee on Education  
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178  
Salem, Oregon

Dear Representative Komp and Senator Monroe,

My name is Caroline M. Cruz, I am the Tribal Health and Human Services Tribal Liaison with The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and I am a Tribal member. For your hearing on House Bill 5016, I cannot be in Salem in person so I am submitting some recommendations by this letter.

I support the Department of Education Early Learning Council and the Youth Development Council budgets. I would like to advocate for the following:

- **More dollars be directed toward both budgets (Early Learning Council and Youth Development Council).** The education system needs support at the grass roots level for our children and youth by providing services to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors by preparing our children and youth for the future and preventing problem behaviors. Dollars were available to all counties when the Oregon Commission on Children and Families was in existence. When these programs were awarded to the Department of Education, funding was reduced.
- **Advocate for base dollars for every county and tribe.** Currently dollars for both councils are competitive. We have a harder time collaborating and sharing information with our partners when we have to compete for the same dollars. This creates an unfair advantage to those who can write the best proposals, for many of the smaller counties and tribes we do not have skilled grant writers available to

us. Tribes and counties have a better chance of collaborating if there is a sense that we are not in competition for dollars, but rather working together to support all of our children and families.

- ***Set aside dollars for the Tribes.*** Tribes need a voice at the state level to advocate for their needs. Devastating risks from historical trauma, poverty, and a lack of adequate resources continue to plague Tribal communities. Statistically, our numbers are higher than state average for school drop out, truancy, problem behaviors, college completion, health issues and many more.
- ***The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs received and successfully implemented two grants with funding from the Youth Coordinating Council.*** Soaring Butterflies/Warrior Spirits is a project that reconnects youth to their culture. Early numbers show a reduction of attendance problems and behavioral problems. We also received a Gang Prevention grant and have similar outcomes. These dollars were awarded last September 2014 and we currently have to compete for these dollars again this month for the next fiscal year. If we are not successful with this award it will be a setback for The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and a disservice to our children and community. This makes continuity in the community difficult, and creates an anxiety with children, families and workers who are creating real change in the community with these programs.
- ***The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs does not receive any dollars currently with the Early Learning Council Hub.*** I sit on the Central Oregon advisory council and hope that this lack will be addressed in the near future. I am on many committees, advisory councils, and sub-committees, and again I ask, "Why are we continuously asked to fight for dollars?"

I would appreciate the Joint Committee on Ways & Means Sub-Committee on Education's support and careful consideration of these issues.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Caroline M. Cruz*

Tribal Health and Human Services Tribal Liaison