Oregon mothers & caregivers need more support.

Mothers and caregivers—especially those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)—have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic thus far. We now have the opportunity to reflect on past policy decisions that put our communities in greater jeopardy and create a different path and more equitable state going forward. In 2022, Family Forward Oregon will be focused on policies that:

Provide emergency response for Oregon's child care crisis (budget requests)

We must address the dire state of child care in Oregon in 2022 if we want to recover economically from the COVID-19 crisis. Our priority budget asks include $21 million for direct relief payments of $500 each to currently-working child care workers, one payment in 2022 and one in 2023; $39.3 million to recruit and train new child care providers, and provide direct grants to expand existing facilities of all types; and $5 million to Child Care Resource & Referral services and $4.3M for the Department of Early Learning & Care to make our public child care system more equitable and beneficial for parents and providers.

Continue to strengthen our public child care system (HB 4005)

We need to increase the amount of money providers who accept Employment Related Daycare (ERDC) subsidies receive per child, so that the true cost of care is closer to be covered; this will also increase purchasing power for parents who utilize ERDC. We must also suspend the rule that requires sprinkler systems for in-home providers until at least 2024.

Ensure equity in Paid Family & Medical Leave implementation (SB 1515)

Currently, the state and employers can have different definitions for the term "benefit year" in state statue. This makes it impossible for the state to properly implement the program for worker. We must align these definitions. Doing so will make filing a PFMLI claim more efficient, and better covers workers with multiple employers.

Improve outcomes for incarcerated women and mothers (HB 4146)

Women are the fastest growing population in state and federal prisons. At Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, 80% of incarcerated women are mothers. Women need tailored services that are trauma-informed and culturally responsive. Without it, prisons continue cycles of trauma, and harm among incarcerated women and the impacts ripple across our communities. This bill requires a gender responsive study at CCCF to improve conditions for incarcerated women and mothers.

Encourage a more equitable & representative legislature (SB 1566)

State legislators in Oregon currently have low annual salaries that do not reflect a living wage Raising the salaries of state legislators would create more opportunities for Oregonians who are low-income, young, BIPOC, and caregivers to run for office. We have also added an additional child care allowance for legislators who are parents of children younger than 13 to help eliminate barriers that caretakers face in the workforce.

Give essential workers the respect they deserve (HB 4001)

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, essential workers have allowed Oregon's communities and economy to function. The Legislature must respond by recognizing the risks essential workers have taken on simply by showing up to do jobs like ringing up groceries, cleaning hospital rooms, driving buses and ambulances, and treating critically ill patients. LC 157 establishes a fund to provide appreciation pay to certain essential workers. While there is much more to do to bring about economic and racial justice for frontline workers, these payments are a starting point.

Create more justice for immigrant Oregonians (SB 1543)
It's time to improve Oregon's legal system by making it more just and inclusive for immigrants. Building off a multi-year pilot program, Universal Legal Representation will expand services through the use of massive collaborative representation, community-based lawyering and client empowerment.

Ensure Oregon's farmworkers are compensated fairly (HB 4002)
In a year of pandemic, catastrophic fires and dangerous levels of air quality, farmworkers continued to work and make sure we have food available. It is time for us to demonstrate our commitment to the economic security of all our workers by extending overtime pay to agricultural workers through the Farmworker Overtime bill.

Make Oregon a place where everyone can feel safe (SB 1510)
Oregon can only be safe when our public safety system is designed to keep all of us safe. Like most states across the country, Oregon's public safety system was designed to uphold white supremacy. It's time for us to transform our public safety system into one that truly provides justice and safety to all. We need to pass SB 1520 in 2022 to reduce unnecessary interactions with law enforcement that increase risks of excessive force and violence, improve success for people on probation and parole, and fund services that reduce racial disparities prevalent in Oregon's criminal justice system.

Meet Our Policy Team

Courtney Helstein, Political Director
courtney@familyforward.org
(503) 915-2948

Lisa Kwon, Policy Manager
lisakwon@familyforward.org
(971) 295-9463

Kaitlin Gaffney, Federal Policy Manager
kaitlin@familyforward.org
(575) 313-5080

Chloe Becker, Lobbyist
chloeb@strategies360.com
(971) 506-7162

Child care, paid family and medical leave, pay equity, Fair Shot agenda, all other issues.

Paid family & medical leave, reproductive and mental health care, criminal justice reform.

Federal policy related to child care, paid leave, sick days & COVID-19 supports.

Policy and government relations support related to child care and paid leave.

Our Movement

Family Forward Oregon is a feminist, anti-racist, grassroots advocacy organization that fights for systems and public policies that value the work of caregiving and directly support mothers and caregivers.

Learn more: familyforwardoregon.org