

February 11, 2026

Dear Spokane County Legislative Delegation,

We, the undersigned citizens, community organizations and partners serving Spokane County, respectfully urge you to oppose HB 2688. Together, we support babies, toddlers, children, and families across Spokane County, and **we share a common goal: ensuring that our youngest children get the strongest possible start.**

We recognize the difficult budget choices facing the state and appreciate the care legislators bring to those decisions. At the same time, we are concerned about the impact proposed reductions to Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) funding under HB 2688 would have on children, families, and the broader Spokane County community.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers serves children from birth to age three with developmental delays, disabilities, or complex medical needs and is often the first support families receive after learning their child may need extra help, many times straight out of the NICU. No other program provides this level of coordinated, medically informed early intervention during the most critical period of brain development. ESIT prevents early delays, even mild ones, from becoming lifelong disabilities.

In Spokane County, the need for early intervention is growing quickly. Local ESIT providers are seeing rising referrals and increasingly complex needs among children and families. Reductions to ESIT funding would likely result in longer waits for services, reduced service intensity, or fewer families served, even as demand continues to rise. These impacts would be felt not only by providers, but by healthcare systems, early learning programs, schools, and community partners across the county.

Families rely on ESIT for services that are urgent and cannot be replaced elsewhere, including feeding therapy, speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, developmental instruction, behavioral support, and care coordination. These services cannot be replaced by private therapy or insurance alone. Without ESIT, many children would not receive the support they need during this critical window of development.

Early intervention works. Research shows that support in the first three years improves long-term outcomes and reduces the need for more intensive and costly services later. When early intervention is available and accessible, children are more likely to enter school ready to learn, and families are better supported.

This issue has also received recent local media attention, reflecting the growing concern among families and providers in our region. You can view the [KHQ coverage here](#).

For these reasons, **we respectfully urge you to oppose HB 2688** and protect funding for Early Support for Infants and Toddlers. We ask that you consider alternatives that preserve this essential system and prevent harm to Spokane's youngest children and their families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The undersigned community organizations, partners and citizens