



To: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development  
From: Pablo Nieves-Valenzuela Portland Community College  
Re: Support for HB 3149, Childcare Taskforce for Community Colleges

If my mother had not had financial access to childcare when she attended New Mexico State University, and access to a childcare facility when she taught at Idaho State University I am certain that I would not be able to attend Pacific University next year. The impact that childcare grants for student parents can have on a family, and over time a community, generate far more value than the cost of the investment. Many students at Portland Community College, including myself, believe that we need a taskforce to find better solution for student parent childcare with limited funding options. The reason why I can say, without a grain of uncertainty, that increasing funding for the grant is the right thing to do is because of the breathtaking impact this kind of support has had in my life. I recently turned 18 years old, and by the beginning of this coming fall term I will have my Associate of Arts Transfer Degree (AOT,) and be on my way to achieving four year degrees in both Political Science and Business Administration at Pacific University.

A little over eighteen years ago my mother gave birth to me, her second child, five days before she completed the written exam for her master's degree in Latin American Literature. Needless to say she is a hardworking individual, but as hard working as she is, she still had to depend on the government to provide her with a subsidy for childcare so that she could continue her education. She received this childcare subsidy throughout the last four years of her six year education. When I asked her how likely it would have been for her to complete her master's degree without the subsidy she told me that she would not have even completed her bachelor's degree, let alone her master's degree, without support from the state.

After she acquired her master's degree she was hired as an instructor at Idaho State University which was an important stepping stone in her career pathway. At ISU she taught Spanish and Latin American Studies courses. In order for her to teach at the university she needed nearby access to low-cost childcare facilities for my older sister and I. Luckily, ISU housed an early learning center, or ELC, which was essentially an on campus daycare. Access to this facility allowed my mother to gain experience as an instructor at a university. My mother has also told me that she could not have possibly landed a position at Pacific University, where she now teaches Spanish, if she had not had the experience of teaching at ISU for five years because the university has such high standards for faculty. In fact, the Center for College Affordability and Productivity recently included Pacific University on its annual list of institutions with the best professors. Clearly, my mother could not have become a professor at this institution without the experience she gained at ISU.