

February 20th, 2019

To: The House Housing and Human Services Committee
From: Rebeca Velazquez,
Re: Support of HB 2346, HB 2348, and HB 2024

Dear Chair Keny Guyer,

My name is Rebeca Velazquez and I live in NE Salem.

I would like to offer testimony on the situation that many families that are not “low income” still have to struggle with. We are in a gray area in a system that only deals with black and white, rich or poor. What about the working class that still can't afford some basic needs such as child care and that often makes us decide on something that really is not a fair choice?

My husband and I struggled having affordable child care available with our last child. We have two older children and therefore many other expenses to cover and consider. I needed to go back to work because we could not afford for me to continue to stay at home. We found ourselves in a difficult situation as we earned more than what low income programs like Head Start allows you to earn to be eligible for services, but not enough to make the cost of quality child care something that we could cover even with two incomes.

Thanks to the fact that I work at a non-profit organization and that they accepted and understood my situation, I was able to take my son to the office. This allowed me to continue to work which was a blessing, but at times created some difficulties. I do not regret having taken my son to work, it allowed me to see him grow up within my workplace until he went into kindergarten. He was missed once he left and had become a normal part of our work environment. He was a quiet baby and I had supportive work group. At the same time, it was not easy nor was it ideal. The cost of child care should not be something that leads us to poverty it is a basic need that all families should be able to access and afford just like K-12 education.

Sincerely,

Rebeca Velazquez