

Submitter: Joan Morgan  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood  
Measure: HB4005

February 2, 2022

To: House Committee on Early Childhood  
From: Joan Morgan, Happy Valley  
Re: Child Care and HB 4005  
Email: morgan.d.joan@gmail.com

Chair Power, Vice Chairs Reynolds and Zika, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joan Morgan and I live in Happy Valley, Oregon. The past two years have changed so much for so many. I've gone from a working mother of two who could get by to a struggling healthcare hero, and back to an overworked and under-appreciated nurse. I've worked at OHSU for the past twelve years, and shortly after the start of the pandemic, we were told that there was a budget shortfall and we needed to prepare for a salary reduction. My pay was cut by 18%--this was not a small insignificant amount. My husband and I sat at the kitchen table and discussed what cuts we would have to make as a family to get by. We tightened the budget and buckled down like so many Oregonians.

Then the bomb dropped. Our childcare center sent a letter home notifying us of a 10% tuition increase. We were now facing \$2,000 per month for childcare. \$24,000 PER YEAR. How on earth could we make this work? The short answer was - we couldn't. We switched shifts, parented on opposite schedules like ships passing in the night. There is no help for working families and I know that we can do better. Months later my salary was restored but the damage was done to our savings account. I'm still working 3 extra shifts per week to make up for the lost wages and childcare costs. I'm very fortunate to be able to pick up these shifts, I'm lucky to have had the flexibility to switch shifts (even though not ideal). My family has caught so many breaks throughout these struggles but what about the families that don't? We can and must do better for our children, our families, and our child care providers. Despite this completely unsustainable cost to our family, our children's providers are being paid very little. Our providers are struggling as well; many have left to take jobs outside of child care.

Please prioritize childcare funding this legislative session and support HB 4005 and other budget investments in our critical child care system.

Thank you,

Joan Morgan