

January 31, 2023

To: Chair Jama, Vice Chair Anderson, and Members of the Committee

I am writing to ask for your support of Senate Bill 599.

I recall as a working single parent how challenging it was to find quality, dependable childcare for my daughter. As a preschooler, she was taken care of by a lovely woman who provided childcare in her home. As a new mother it was difficult to leave my child but I felt she was in a safe environment. Knowing she was in “good hands” allowed me to focus on my job which I needed in order to support my family.

I know that finding childcare today is even more difficult than it was when I was looking. There are just not enough quality caregivers to meet the demand from working parents. More women are working out of the home and need affordable childcare. In-home childcare is much more affordable than large chain facilities. Income inequality does not allow most families and especially single parents to pay the fees for these “top of the line” childcare businesses. These chains may be expanding mostly in urban areas while in-home childcare is becoming harder to find in smaller cities and rural areas. These companies can offer higher wages because they are charging more for their services that cater to higher income families. This reduces the number of caregivers available elsewhere which can lead to smaller companies going out of business. The need for in-home childcare is crucial to meet the demand given the limited supply.

SB 599 would enable more caregivers to open their homes to offer childcare at a lower cost to lower income families. The bill would offer more options for working parents who are marginalized; people of color, LGBTQ+, undocumented workers.

I ask that you support SB 599 for the children of Oregon.

Respectfully Submitted,

Regina Ayars
Ashland Oregon