

Submitter: Nicole Arenas-Redinger

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5013

Hello, My name is Nicole Arenas Redinger and I am a licensed in home registered childcare provider here in Multnomah county. My license capacity is for 10 children and all of the current families I have are on ODHS/ERDC/Higher Special needs rate that is a state funded program to help with the cost of childcare while families are able to work & go to school.

I want to share the importances to keep funding these levels high enough so that the increase subsidy rates that passed last year to continue. Reason I say this is because it helps with the current high cost of everything that we are all dealing with and people can barely stay afloat. I am only currently charging families what DHS charges for Childcare rates so these parents do not have to worry, except for their copayments. I also want to let you know that I, myself live paycheck to paycheck everything goes right back into my child care business for these families. They all become a 2nd family to me and they express the same to me and are so grateful for a provider like me because nobody can compare.

I provide everything for these families for their children. I provide everything including food, drinks, spare diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, spare clothing, transportation to, and from school, toys, preschool activities, playground, sensory activities, maintaining of the child care home, bills and childcare vehicle. For those that need special accommodations I accommodate to those like for instance, if a special-needs child needs MECP Services or therapy services. A teacher or therapist will come into my home and help work with the child. I don't ask for any additional fees only because these low income families can barely afford their co-pay on top of their own family living expenses without making a payment plan.

I try my hardest to create a stress-free childcare environment for these families because money stresses, families out when they can barely afford their own bills due to high rent, bills and food stamps is not covering the whole month anymore for families and they have to fork out their own cash. I really hope you can continue with these higher levels to help, because going back down is going to cause major stress to these families, because they do not deserve this to be stressing how to cover the rest of the childcare cost out of pocket if it were to go back like it was before. Inflation of cost of living has killed us! These lower income families, struggle enough. I have seen the tears of these families I have worked with and I have been in business since 2013.

I also would like to put out there that it would be amazing if you raise the Eligibility

limits higher for more families to qualify for childcare assistance because even if they make like a dollar over the limit they cannot qualify for services and then they are struggling big time to find childcare for their children. It is very sad to say when families cannot qualify those cash, paying families have to find the cheapest sitter possible in order to afford basic, living expenses and that could be putting their child at risk of a uneducated unlicensed provider in an unsafe environment leading to child endangerment, no family deserves that just because they make a few dollars more than the eligibility limit. These children are the future of our world, and they deserve the best early education as possible in a licensed setting.

I want to thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Best regards,
Mrs. Nicole's in-home Childcare.