

Submitter: Kerala Taylor
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

April 7, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Ways & Means
From: Kerala Taylor, Portland, OR
Re: Investment in child care

Co-Chairs Senator Steiner and Rep Sanchez, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kerala Taylor and I live in Portland, OR. When my children were young, I served as the primary or sole income provider for my family. The constant juggle of finding childcare for two children that attained that perfect trifecta of convenient, high-quality, and affordable was nearly impossible. It might be high-quality, but not affordable; it might be affordable, but it doesn't open early enough to be viable; it might be convenient, but not high-quality. Or it might attain all three, but not have any available openings. It has been left to working parents, particularly mothers, to shoulder the financial and emotional burden of a broken system that devalues our childcare providers, our children, and our families.

The pure exhaustion and constant financial stress caused by our piecemeal, expensive, and inaccessible childcare system has diminished so much of the joy I would have otherwise felt as a mother of young children. It's time for our government to recognize that an adequately funded and resourced childcare infrastructure would benefit working parents, the childcare providers who struggle to stay financially afloat while providing essential services, and indeed the backbone of our entire economy.

That is why I urge you to prioritize funding for child care, to help make it more affordable for parents, support the child care workforce, and help build the physical infrastructure we need to better serve our families and children. You have the opportunity to invest in child care and make a difference for our state. I hope you will make that choice.

Sincerely,
Kerala Taylor