

Submitter: Luz Quevedo
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

April 7, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Ways & Means
From: Luz Quevedo, Salem
Re: Child Care Funding

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

My name is Luz Quevedo and I am the mother to 3 year-old Milan.

I write to urge you to invest as much money as you can in child care because the child care crisis that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic is now a state of emergency for parents, providers, and kids across Oregon. My family, who I need to take care of, has had to decide to pay for basic things like rent, food and utilities or child care because the cost of child care is very high in our state. When I started to look for child care for my baby, it was so overwhelming.. Because we are a low income family, we have to carefully consider our ability to pay for the care we want for our son.

I applied for ERDC - however, even after qualifying for it, it has been so difficult to find a childcare provider or center that is taking children. Each time I have called I have been told to get on a waiting list. There simply is not enough child care supply, especially for low-income families.

The current system is not serving our current communities' needs. For families like mine, the hoops and hurdles we have to undertake in order to be able to go to work and provide for our family's very basic needs has been so strenuous and stressful. I have often found myself considering not working. However when I look at our financial situation it is just not an option and I feel desperate and frustrated to the point of bursting into tears from it all.

I have heard that there is little to no money to invest in child care in the next budget. I disagree. Oregon has two savings accounts, which according to news outlets are at very high levels. We should use the money in these savings accounts and invest them in programs that will help Oregonians NOW. It should not have to be this hard- having a beautiful baby is something I had longed for for many years. Having a fulfilling life without worrying about our basic needs should not have to be part of this beautiful part of parenting life.

Our state cannot afford to NOT take action and invest as much as we can in child care. Providers should be properly compensated for their work, and families should have access to high-quality, affordable, and culturally relevant childcare. Please make child care a high priority as you make your budget decisions.

Sincerely,
Luz Quevedo