

DeTo: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
From: Child Care for Oregon
oIDate: February 11, 2025
RE: In Support of HB 3008

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, members of the committee:

As a child care worker of 10+ years, I am writing to the committee today to express my strong support for HB 3008. In Bend wages are not the best to keep up with the cost of being a Pre-K teacher. There is no supply closet to run to for paint, paper, art supplies, pencils, pens, folders, etc. you get the idea. We have to supply and buy our own materials. Often including simple cleaning products and educational materials. We put in long hours much of our own time unpaid planning and preparation as well as shopping. We do not get reimbursed for this but to be successful and keep of with state standards we do this because we care and love these little ones so much and want to help give them a good start to their future. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of other child care workers such as myself, child care businesses, and the families we work with.

As a childcare worker, I know firsthand the hardships workers face in this industry. Low wages have made it difficult to make ends meet, and the lack of benefits forces us to decide whether we can continue in this line of work. It does not surprise me that there is such a significant gap in the childcare workforce; with low wages and little to no benefits, it is difficult to be able to support myself and my family. The income I do earn I spend at least \$100:00-\$400.00 a month back into my classroom. Replenishing toys, supplies, etc.

House Bill 3008 helps us address these problems. By continuing to invest in the Child Care Recognition Payment Program and child care apprenticeship programs across the state, this legislation will support child care workers like myself by providing financial support during economic uncertainty, expanding pathways and hands-on training for those interested in the industry without having to take on debt, and supporting child care businesses that are struggling to recruit and retain workers. I was so thankful for the \$500.00 reimbursement this year I was able to do a good stock up for my kids and pay off a creditor. I pray this great program continues as many centers struggle just to stay open because costs for everything is so high. Parents work hard for their money too and many see the struggle teachers and centers have.

As a child care worker, I believe that HB 3008 aligns with my core values of promoting quality, affordability, and accessibility in child care. We cannot have these things without a strong, diverse, and supported workforce. By investing in the workforce, we can ensure that all workers are supported in their careers while providers like me are guaranteed high-quality workers to care for young Oregonians.

In conclusion, I urge you to support House Bill 3008. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of Oregon child care workers like me. By investing in the

workforce, we can ensure that all workers are supported in their careers while providers are guaranteed high-quality workers to care for young Oregonians.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Lisa Schoebel