



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

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

My name is Janet Li, and I am the Child Care Project Manager at APANO Communities United Fund (CUF).

As a supporter of child care workers, I am writing to the committee today to express my strong support for HB 3008. As a resident of Portland and a project manager for a program supporting child care workers, I recognize the crucial need for quality child care and sustainability for child care workers. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of other child care workers, child care businesses, and the families we work with.

As a supporter of child care workers, I am aware of the hardships workers face in this industry. Low wages have made it difficult to make ends meet, and the lack of benefits forces child care workers to decide whether they can continue in this line of work. It does not surprise me that there is such a significant gap in the child care workforce; with low wages and little to no benefits, it is difficult for child care workers to sustain a living. Child care workers understand that the child care industry is not particularly profitable. They notice shortcomings in their own children's care experiences and strive to enhance the quality of child care for both their children and those in their communities. However, resources available in different languages are limited or of low quality. As a result, many of these workers aim to be pioneers in their communities, working to establish high-quality child care environments.

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 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. Many child care workers I collaborate with serve families from lower-income backgrounds who cannot afford the average tuition rates charged by child care centers. As someone who developed a program aimed at helping individuals navigate the licensing process, I believe that expanding child care apprenticeships, specifically languages other than English, would greatly benefit incoming child care workers throughout the state. Many of these individuals were teachers or child care workers in their home countries before

immigrating to the United States. However, when they attempt to enter the entry into the workforce here, they often encounter a foreign system and significant language barriers, discouraging them from continuing in their previous professions.

It is crucial to create a seamless transition that minimizes challenges for child care workers, enabling them to continue providing quality care for their communities.

As a supporter of child care workers, 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 the longevity of their careers while providers 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.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Li". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet Li
Child Care Project Manager | APANO Communities United Fund (CUF)