

Submitter: Samantha Morelli  
On Behalf Of: Oregon Center for Career Development  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

I am Samantha Morelli the Program Manager for the Child Care Recognition Payment Program and prior to this I was a child care worker for 13 years and I am writing in support of HB 5006 which would directly impact the funding for HB3008. For the last year myself and a team of 3 have been distributing \$500 payments to child care workers in accordance with HB502. Part of this legislation was created to support the child care workforce with one-time payments over 2024 and 2025. Over this first year we were able to distribute 7.7 million dollars to over 15,000 child care workers across the state of Oregon. In the first month alone, we had 6,000 child workers apply! My team has worked diligently to perfect our system to reach even more child care workers and distribute the remaining money this year. These one-time payments of \$500 may seem modest, but they've had a profound impact on the lives of child care workers. We've heard countless stories of workers using this funding to enhance their programs, purchase essential supplies, and even cover unexpected expenses. One conversation that stands out is with a single mother who received a payment just in time to help her cover an unexpected medical bill, easing her financial stress.

Investing in the Oregon Child Care Recognition Payment Program has far-reaching benefits:

**It Supports Economic Stability.** By providing financial support to child care workers, we enable them to continue their critical work, supporting families and contributing to local economies.

**It Promotes Quality Early Childhood Education.** Experienced child care workers are essential for delivering high-quality early childhood education, which lays the foundation for future academic success and lifelong learning.

**It Fosters a Stronger Workforce.** By recognizing and rewarding child care workers, we demonstrate our commitment to their well-being and the value of their work, helping to attract and retain top talent in this field.

At the end of the first year, we surveyed the recipients of this payment; 90% of the child care workers who received this funding said they want to stay in this field and 70% of those same people say that they do not make enough to provide for them and their family. Continuing this program helps to support child care workers financially and keep experienced people in the field. Child care is not an easy job and the people who work in it do so because they believe in the critical role early childhood education plays in the lives of children and in our whole society. It is an honor to support them and continuing this payment program is one way we can do that. I urge you to pass HB3008, ensuring that more child care workers can receive

the financial support they deserve. This investment is not just a moral imperative; it's a sound economic strategy that will yield long-term benefits for our state's future. By continuing this program, we demonstrate our commitment to supporting the dedicated individuals who care for our children and shape their futures. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.