

To: Ways and Means Committee

From: Alisha Hendrickson

Date: 4/8/2025

Co-Chair Tawna D. Sanchez, Co-Chair Kate Lieber and members of the the Committee

My name is Alisha Hendrickson and I am a Certified Family Child Care Provider.

I'm writing to urge lawmakers to invest an additional \$500 million for the Employment Related Day Care Program in SB 5514, the Department of Early Learning and Care agency budget. Investing an additional \$500 million dollars in ERDC is crucial to stabilizing the entire child care ecosystem and is essential to addressing long-standing issues plaguing our child care system. By doing so, we can ensure that all families, regardless of income level, have access to affordable and high-quality child care options that meet our unique needs. This investment will have a ripple effect throughout our economy, supporting small businesses, creating jobs, and stimulating local economic growth.

I have accepted ERDC payments since opening my child care business in 2013. I have helped so many underprivileged and low-income families access childcare so that they could go to work. One of the single mom's I had as a client recently graduated with her RN and is moving off public assistance entirely this month. ERDC allowed her to escape domestic violence by accessing child care so that she could work and go back to school. I cannot emphasize enough that this would not have been possible for her without ERDC. She will now be completely self-sufficient and safe because of this program. I cannot emphasize enough how crucial this funding is for Oregon's families. Please prioritize this funding.

Funding ERDC will also go a long way to stabilize child care providers. We need to know that working families can access funding for child care. Just like everything else in this economy the true cost of care is always going up. We do our best to keep rates reasonable but gas, groceries, utilities, mortgages all need to be paid and we just cannot go any lower. Please fund ERDC fully and show Oregon's working families that they are supported.

Thank you,
Alisha Hendrickson
Lebanon Oregon