

Submitter: Alexia Nice
On Behalf Of: Sweet Peas Daycare and Preschool
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Good evening, my name is Alexia Nice, and I am the owner and provider of a Certified Family Child Care home as well as Preschool Promise Teacher located in La Grande, Oregon.

I'm here tonight to ask you to please not overlook the importance of supporting our children. It is essential to fully fund the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program so that families have access to safe childcare options. This support will enable parents to make informed choices about employment without the fear of losing essential income. We want to promote self-sufficiency through stable employment, rather than reliance on public assistance. Access to quality childcare funded by ERDC is crucial to ensure that children are safe, rather than being left in potentially unsafe care situations. Investing in education, particularly early childhood education, is essential. High-quality early education plays a crucial role in preparing children for elementary school by cultivating essential skills in language, problem-solving, and social interaction, which are vital for a successful transition into formal education.

Seven years ago, I was a single mother of two children, employed for over 40 hours per week to support my family. Had I not received assistance from the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program during that period, it is unlikely that I would have achieved my current successes.

Throughout our challenges, I can confidently say that I never had to worry about my children's care. I was able to work and create a life that I take pride in, thanks to the support of ERDC and child care assistance, which enabled me to build the life we are currently enjoying. I'm now an accomplished business owner with a bachelors through Eastern Oregon University. I'd also like to mention that a lot of my education wouldn't have been able to have been accomplished if I hadn't had my children in care then too.

By investing in ERDC, you are contributing to the future well-being of our children and their families.