



Child Care That Works. For Every Family.

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:

On behalf of the Child Care for Oregon Coalition, a coalition of nonprofit organizations, labor unions, community advocates, parents, caregivers and providers working to build a comprehensive early learning and child care system in Oregon, we strongly urge your support of House Bill 3008.

As a coalition, we recognize that child care is the workforce behind the workforce. The 2024 Oregon Talent Assessment<sup>1</sup> named child care as having the most significant labor gaps out of all industries by almost 13%. These gaps are seen in the industry's inability to recruit and retain workers due to:

- Earning low wages, lower than most other industries<sup>2</sup>
- Lack of necessary benefits such as health insurance and retirement<sup>3</sup>
- Barriers to entering the workforce without economic strife

House Bill 3008 will support and expand the state's current and future child care workforce. Through continued investment in the Child Care Recognition Payment Program and apprenticeship programs across the state, this will support child care workers by:

- Continuing to provide financial support to child care workers during economic uncertainty
- Expand the number of quality child care workers who have both education and hands-on experience

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/strategy-research/Documents/Reports/2024-talent-assessment.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/child-care-workers-5.25.23v3.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epi.org/publication/higher-wages-for-child-care-and-home-health-care-workers/#~:text=By%20the%20numbers.of%20the%20child%20care%20workforce>

- Support child care businesses that are struggling to retain and recruit quality workers

As a coalition, we believe that HB 3008 aligns with our core values of promoting quality, affordability, and accessibility in child care; we cannot have this without a strong, diverse, and supported workforce.

We anticipate that HB 3008 will have several specific benefits for Oregon families and child care businesses, including:

- Recognizing the value and the work of child care workers by providing additional financial support
- Increased pathways to enter into the child care industry
- Strengthens the child care industry overall which has downstream positive impacts on workforce participation, economic security for working families, and early literacy and school readiness.

In conclusion, we 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. 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 our testimony.

Sincerely,



Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children

