

Submitter: Sophie Schwanz-Jones  
On Behalf Of: Anonymous Mother  
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1507

Hello, I am a mother.

Oregon families and child care providers are sounding the alarm: our state's Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program is on the brink of collapse. With a projected \$88 million shortfall and the program at risk of shutting down by January 2027 without intervention, the consequences will be catastrophic — not just for working parents, but for our entire economy.

I'm writing to urge lawmakers to use reserve funds to backfill the \$88 million deficit for the Employment Related Day Care Program.

If the ERDC program runs out of funding, the consequences will be immediate and severe: parents will be forced to make impossible choices—such as cutting back on essentials or pulling their children out of care altogether. Childcare providers, many of whom operate on thin margins, will face closures or reduced capacity as families can no longer afford their services. This isn't just a budget line—it's a crisis in the making, one that hits working families hardest and threatens the backbone of our local economy. Child care is integral to our infrastructure and a necessary public investment; it's time we treated it like one.

I support ERDC because as a parent who relies on child care to go to work, I recognize how important it is to be able to afford reliable child care. Since my son was born, my family has had challenges in finding quality care that is affordable. We have not qualified for ERDC, but childcare costs in our area are nearly as high as our monthly mortgage payment, and continue to go up. Last year, my son's fulltime preschool program raised their rates by over 10%. Instead of losing funding for ERDC, it should be using revenue to expand so that more families have options and support in paying for quality care for their children.

In addition to being a parent who relies on childcare, I also work at a community college. Many of the students I serve are parents who rely on ERDC to be able to attend their classes and achieve their degrees. It is extremely important for students to have affordable childcare that they can trust, so that they can afford their classes and basic necessities, and have the time they need to study and complete their coursework.

There is an extreme shortage of affordable care in Lane County, and limiting options further by losing funding for ERDC makes it nearly impossible for parents to stay employed and to go back to or start school so that they can succeed in the workforce. It's pouring in Oregon. I urge you to use revenue and reserves to close the \$88 million shortfall for the ERDC program in the Department of Early Learning and Care budget.

Thank you,  
Anonymous