

Submitter: Amy Stein
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1507

My name is Amy Stein, and I am a mother, provider and former ERDC recipient. 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 single parent working full time I relied on ERDC. I couldn't have done it any other way. My son was special needs, severely ADHD, dad was MIA after the divorce, and I had no family around to watch him. I couldn't leave a kindergarten alone, or even with neighbors because of his special needs. It was myself or a trained professional and ERDC gave me that option with Kindercare. I was able to be fully employed and graduated out of the program. That would never have happened without ERDC. If I didn't have ERDC as an option I would have had to choose between neglecting my kid, a crime, or finding different, employment which was uncertain.

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,
Amy Stein