

Submitter: Kelly Mehigan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1507

My name is Kelly Mehigan, and I am a parent and provider.

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 I am a therapist and work with families that would be impacted by the budget shortfall of ERDC.

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,

Kelly Mehigan