



PETER COURTNEY  
President of the Senate

**Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education**

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Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chair  
Senator Michael Dembrow  
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*TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY*

*Summer Learning and Childcare Package*

*March 15, 2021*

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator from District 11. I am here to testify in support of the Summer Learning and Child Care Package.

Friday, March 13th, 2020 was a big day for our students. It was their last day in the classroom. Back then, they thought it would only be a short time until they went back to school... just a few weeks.

It has now been over one year since some of our students have seen the inside of their classrooms. A year since they've seen their teachers and friends in-person.

Our kids need help. We've all heard countless stories about students falling behind. Distance learning just does not work well for some students. They're having a tough time keeping up, through no fault of their own.

It has also been hard on their parents and teachers. Parents have gone above and beyond to keep their kids on track, even if it means taking time off of work. Teachers have had to change the way they teach in an instant. All while making sure kids don't fall through the cracks.

Kids aren't only struggling in school... they're also struggling socially and emotionally. More of our kids are dealing with anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. Our children are being really affected by this pandemic.

We've introduced these summer programs because it has never been more urgent to invest in our kids. This summer, we want them to go outside. We want them to have fun. We want them to learn. We need to support their mental and physical health.

These programs will get our kids back out doing the things they love. It'll fund activities for kids of all ages. It will fund child care to make sure any family is able to join. High school students who have fallen behind in distance learning will have the chance to make up credits. Children will be able to learn and play this summer.

Thank you, Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the committee for allowing me to testify. I hope everyone will be able to support this package. It is for the children.