

April 27th, 2021

To: House Committee on Rules

Re: HB 3073

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Co-Chairs Drazan, Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lucia Sanchez and I live in Salem. In society we always say that the future of our children is the future of our country and communities. As parents, at some point we have all needed childcare services (unless we have the privilege of being financially stable and can stay home to raise our children). I don't have that privilege and most families in Oregon don't live with that privilege either. Therefore, we have to navigate many challenges that cause stress and anxiety and we face difficult decisions every day. When we have the support and we get to qualify for a program like ERDC, it is often not enough as the co-pay rate is too high for a single mother like me.

You have in your hands the power to decide to make a change that can be historic for our state. Today, I ask you to give yourself the opportunity to really see the reality with a parents' lens. If you needed childcare, what would you look for and what would you expect if you had to leave your sons and daughters to go to work at this time?

In general, what we seek is that our children have quality care. We ask that the first years of our children's lives be in a safe place and that the most important areas of development such as cognitive, language, social/emotional, mathematics and motor skills are developed properly in a healthy and safe environment.

As parents with a lot of pain, we leave those we love the most, our children. Hoping that this care is similar to the care that our parents would give them. What would you say to your children, where would you leave them? We ask that you do the right thing and properly fund child care! This legislation is a step forward in bringing us closer to the future we need.

Oregon's children, parents, and society at large should have access to high-quality, affordable child care services. Unfortunately, that is not our current reality and it is still a privilege that really needs to be a basic need we meet. It's critical that Oregon take immediate action to make child care affordable for all families, starting with those who need it most-- families like mine. For this reason, I am pleading with the committee to pass HB 3703, which would expand eligibility and protect current investments for the ERDC program, and make the program more accessible, practical, and functional for parents and providers.

Sincerely,  
Lucia Sanchez  
Salem, OR 97305