

Submitter: Angie Garcia

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5013

March 2, 2023

To: The Joint Ways & Means Sub-Committee on Education

From: Angie Garcia

Re: HB 5013, child care investments

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and members of the committee,

My name is Angie Garcia and I live and work in Portland Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences with you today. I own 2 centers in Portland, currently serving approximately 100 families, and getting set to open a third in Gresham, serving an additional 30 families.

As a provider, working with families for more than 17 years, I know people working in the child care sector make it possible for many of our state industries — and our larger economy — to function. Parents, providers, and employers need Oregon to continue to make progress on building a child care system that recognizes this essential role.

The pandemic was particularly hard on my industry. Having a system of care that is reliant on a family's ability to pay makes us vulnerable. I am fielding over a dozen new prospective families a week. We will likely be full again by this summer. Our waitlist continues to grow and we will not be able to fill the need for child care in our community when parents are ready and able to go to work. Only families who can afford to pay for their spots now will be able access care. Centers like mine will take the money, because we desperately need it to survive. Calling into question, once again, the equity of our system.

I urge you to protect and expand current investments in our early learning and child care programs and fully fund the critical work of the Department of Early Learning & Care.

Thank you for your time.

Angie Garcia, MSW