

May 3, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Ways & Means  
From: First Last Name, City or County  
Re: Child Care Funding

Co-Chairs Senator Steiner and Rep Sanchez, Members of the Committee:

My name is Eugenie Adamah-Tassah and I live in Beaverton, Oregon with my two children; ages 11 and 8. I am a graduate of Multnomah University with a master's degree in Global Development and Justice; and I am also an active member in my community here in Oregon.

I am writing this letter to urge you to prioritize funding for childcare in the state budget because the child care crisis that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic is still a state of emergency for parents, providers, and kids across Oregon and I am one of them.

Access to child care services has always been a great struggle for me and families in my community because it is very expensive and for many families, it feels as if we are working to simply pay our bills and to pay others to care for our children. The wages received from employment are barely enough to cover basic family expenses including child care.

Access to child care services was hard for me before the pandemic because my income was not enough to cover all the basic household expenses. But another challenge I faced was the lack of resources to assist with child care expenses so I could put in more work hours to raise my income level. This is a common struggle among first-generation immigrants in the state of Oregon who don't have family members to rely on for child care assistance.

Child care scarcity and affordability is a great issue that impacts most families with young children because it causes the parent to spend more time away from their children; letting someone else raise and influence their children; which many times result in other social issues.

I believe that the State of Oregon can help address accessibility and affordability issues in the child care sector by providing subsidies and funding opportunities to help support an increase and expansion of these services in our state. In order to support parents and children alike, we must prioritize funding child care access and affordability. Parents should not have to worry about their child care increasing every year like their rent. The child care system provides families with opportunities to pursue employment, and also to care for other issues while children are being cared for by trusted providers.

My asks:

- Invest in affordability and access to child care services in Oregon

- Increase support for service providers who are particularly providing their services to families with children with disabilities
- Address disparities in access to culturally and linguistically responsive care
- Support local community efforts and initiatives such as child care support groups led by members of specific communities to help their members pursue employment opportunities while children are being cared for.

I have heard that there is little to no money to invest in child care in the next budget. I disagree. Oregon has two savings accounts, which according to news outlets are at historically high levels. It is time to access our state savings accounts and invest them in programs that will help Oregonians NOW. I urge you all to use savings funds and invest in child care this session. Our state cannot afford to *not* invest in child care.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eugenie S. Adamah-Tassah