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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce  
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3011

Hello and thank you for the opportunity to express support for HB3011.

The shortage of available and quality early childcare is a problem that touches both my professional and personal experience. I am an architect in Oregon, currently working on a childcare facility expansion project at OSU. Over the course of the project I've seen how passionate our clients are about providing quality early childhood education that supports children's healthy physical and cognitive development. I've gathered that our clients are under incredible pressure to meet an urgent demand for expanded services from the families in their community. The project is expected to be substantially complete in June of this year, but I was shocked and dismayed when I recently learned that our clients are facing difficulty in hiring qualified people to actually staff their soon-to-be new classrooms. The high demand for childcare services and the shortage of qualified service providers is a crisis for working families.

As my partner and I plan to start our own family, without exception, every peer and friend who has started a family has warned us about the challenge of finding childcare at all, let alone quality early childhood education. We have been told to "get on childcare facility waitlists as soon as you're thinking about having a baby," because some waitlists are two years long. Some friends have divulged that nearly all of one parent's income is spent on childcare, which often results in one partner leaving the workforce and missing the opportunity to contribute to the family's upward economic mobility. Or, both parents, working full-time to afford the cost of living and childcare, are simply too busy and exhausted to be there for their children in the way they want to be.

Every parent wants what's best for their children. Quality, affordable, early childhood education could have a profound impact on our society and future. If we want to see Oregon's people, families, and communities thrive, we have to support existing childcare providers, expand childcare services, and invest in training future early childcare educators. Please do everything in your power to support the passage of HB3011. Thank you.