

Submitter: Natalia Blanco

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce
Development

Measure, Appointment or
Topic: HB3008

To: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

From: Child Care for Oregon

Date: February 11, 2025

RE: In Support of HB 3008

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, members of the committee:

As a child care provider for 2 years, I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3008. My family and I work hard to have our childcare's working in the metro area. We are located in Beaverton, Hillsboro and Cornelius. I started childcare as a child, in my mothers daycare which is now about over 15 years ago. Gotitas Del Saber II focuses on making sure children grow with loving quality child care so that they can grow to be young healthy adults as the primary focus. With that being said, this legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of child care workers, child business owners and providers like me, and the families we serve.

As a child care provider, I know firsthand the challenges that our industry faces. Low wages, lack of benefits, and barriers to entering the workforce have led to significant labor gaps in our field. This is not surprising, given that many of us are struggling to make ends meet on low wages and without access to basic benefits like health insurance and retirement plans. That is why I am grateful to have this help now and hopefully continue it in the future. Even though \$500 might not seem like a lot for one person, it definitely made an impact for me as each day is a constant battle trying to figure out which worry I have to face day to day.

House Bill 3008 helps us address these problems. By continuing to invest in the Child Care Recognition Payment Program and apprenticeship programs across the state, this legislation will support child care workers like me by providing financial assistance during economic uncertainty, expanding pathways for education and hands-on experience without having to take on a bunch of student debt, and supporting child care businesses that are struggling to retain and recruit quality workers. Both myself and my ten employees that I oversee were able to apply and utilize the \$500 bonus checks. The bonus checks helped my employees and I out during financial stress by helping us pay off bills that were at the top of our minds. Personally, I was able to pay off the debt that I owed the IRS for my business. These annual payments, while small in hindsight, made enough of an impact to relieve some amount of financial burden for myself and my workers.

As a provider, I believe that HB 3008 aligns with my core values of promoting quality, affordability, and accessibility in child care. We cannot have these things without a

strong, diverse, and supported workforce. By investing in the workforce, we can ensure that all workers are supported in their careers while providers like me are guaranteed high-quality workers to care for young Oregonians.

In conclusion, I urge you to support House Bill 3008. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of Oregon child care workers like me. By investing in the workforce, we can ensure that all workers are supported in their careers while providers are guaranteed high-quality workers to care for young Oregonians.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Natalia