

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 worker of 15 number of years, I am writing to the committee today to express my strong support for HB 3008. Childcare is essential for most homes these days as both parents work. The money many homes has to spend on childhood is not significant enough to pay wages to childcare workers that lets those workers did little more than pay the bills, if it stretches that far. This legislation has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of other child care workers such as myself, child care businesses, and the families we work with.

As a childcare worker, I know firsthand the hardships workers face in this industry. Low wages have made it difficult to make ends meet, and the lack of benefits forces us to decide whether we can continue in this line of work. It does not surprise me that there is such a significant gap in the childcare workforce; with low wages and little to no benefits, it is difficult to be able to support myself and my family. Many people I work with, and myself included, are thinking of working in other fields or are actively getting educated for other fields as this level of pay is not sustainable long term.

House Bill 3008 helps us address these problems. By continuing to invest in the Child Care Recognition Payment Program and child care apprenticeship programs across the state, this legislation will support child care workers like myself by providing financial support during economic uncertainty, expanding pathways and hands-on training for those interested in the industry without having to take on debt, and supporting child care businesses that are struggling to recruit and retain workers. Last year I used part of the money to pay bills and the other to travel to see my nephew and niece for the first time as I had not been able to afford to see them.

As a child care worker, 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,
Elayne Sloan