

Submitter: Amelia Fox

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 teacher of 20 years, I am writing to the committee today to express my strong support for HB 3008. I'm a Pre-K teacher in Eugene, working with four and five year olds and their families. The teachers at our school do such important work, supporting children and their families during this vital time of development and providing them with a loving community in which to grow and thrive. 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 an early childhood teacher, 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. The reason we do do what we do is because we love our jobs. Unfortunately, sometimes we are forced to choose between that and supporting ourselves and our families.

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. I was the lucky and grateful recipient of Child Care Recognition Payment funds this past year and it certainly made a difference to our family. I hope that the program can continue and expand, to include more people and to help give a leg up to those interested in joining us, but balking at the low pay and support.

As an early childhood teacher, 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 and that caring, qualified people are interested in joining our field.

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,
Amelia Fox