

Submitter: Candice Whitcher

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 worker of 12 years, I am writing to the committee today to express my strong support for HB 3008. Living and working in Wilsonville, I am both professionally and personally invested in early childhood education and care. 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. As a childcare worker with my own two young children in childcare, the hardships are even more prevalent. The cost of childcare coupled with low wages for educators weighs heavy on my mind.

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.

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,
Candice Whitcher