

Submitter: April Gonzalez

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5514

I am a Head Start employee of 12 years, and I work a screener for services in the ERSEA department. On a daily basis, I listen to the stories of parents, trying to do the best for their children and working through a multitude of challenges. I listen to a parent admit that they cannot move forward without help. As we move through the school year, I am able to see a parent gain the confidence they needed to guide their families forward. I hear statements about a life changed, a life bettered and sometimes, a life saved.

Head Start programs are an essential service that needs to exist for both parent and child. These programs are staffed by dedicated and compassionate individuals that do some of the hardest work there is out there. They deserve to be paid well for the service they provide, to work in clean and healthy environments that will strengthen them and to have everything they need in order to provide this amazing experience.

Performing the work I do, is my investment into the future. We are growing future leaders, teachers, doctors and paving the way to see our communities continue to improve. Head Start needs to be well funded and it needs to continue to spread in our communities.