

Submitter: Monica Guerrero-Acosta
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3201

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

My name is Monica Guerrero-Acosta, and I am the director of a certified child care program in Tangent, Oregon. For the past 5.5 years, I have been committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for young children. As a provider, I have seen firsthand how critical the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is in ensuring that children receive the nutritious meals they need to grow, learn, and thrive.

For many families in our community, access to high-quality child care and nutritious meals is a lifeline. Parents are working long hours, often struggling to make ends meet, and rely on programs like CACFP to provide their children with consistent, balanced meals. The rising cost of food and the financial challenges of running a child care business make it increasingly difficult to maintain the level of care that all children deserve. Without strong support for CACFP, both providers and families face significant hardships.

In my own program, I have seen the difference that proper nutrition makes in a child's ability to focus, engage, and develop healthy habits. However, the reimbursement rates for meals do not reflect the true cost of providing fresh, nutritious options. Many child care providers are forced to stretch their resources thin, making difficult decisions about meal quality and portion sizes. Expanding support for CACFP would not only alleviate these challenges but also ensure that more children have access to the healthy food they need to thrive.

I urge you to prioritize funding and policy changes that strengthen CACFP. By investing in our youngest learners, you are investing in the future of Oregon. Thank you for your time and commitment to supporting children and families in our state.

Sincerely,
Monica Guerrero-Acosta
Director and Child Care provider of
La Escuelita Bilingue, LLC
Tangent, Oregon