

Submitter: Andrea Metheney
On Behalf Of: Audreona Mullens
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5514

Date: 3/5/25
SB 5514 In Support

My name is Audreona , and I am a parent of one child, who is an amazing 5 year old. As a resident of Oregon, I am here today to express my strong support for investing in the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program.

As a parent, I have faced significant challenges in finding quality child care that meets the needs of my family. Despite my best efforts using various resources, I have struggled to find affordable and reliable options that align with my work schedule and my children's unique needs. This has resulted in anxiety about my ability to maintain employment and provide my child with the social and educational opportunities they need.

I was fortunate enough to find an amazing childcare provider who specializes in childcare for children with disabilities and neurodivergent children. However, her business is always in jeopardy because she relies heavily on ERDC families, but can't find them due to the waitlist. This not only affects low-income families who rely on ERDC but also private pay families like mine who are willing to pay out of pocket for quality care and need our amazing providers to be able to afford to keep their doors open..

That's why I believe that investing an additional \$500 million dollars in ERDC is crucial to stabilizing the entire child care marketplace. By doing so, we can ensure that more families have access to affordable and high-quality child care options, regardless of their income level. ERDC provides critical support to child care providers like my provider, helping them navigate the complex child care system and providing resources to improve their services.

If we invest in ERDC, I believe that my family will directly benefit from the expanded services offered by this program. By providing grants to ERDC, we can help ensure that:

More families have access to quality child care
Parents receive the support they need to make informed decisions about their children's care
Child care providers are held to high standards, ensuring a safe and nurturing

environment for our children

In conclusion, I urge you to invest an additional \$500 million dollars in ERDC. This funding has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of Oregon families like mine. By investing in ERDC, we can ensure that all parents have access to the resources they need to provide their children with a strong foundation for success.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Audreona