

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

My name is Luz Quevedo and I am the mother to 5 year-old Milan.

I write to urge you to invest as much money as you can in child care because the child care. My family, who I need to take care of, has had to decide to pay for basic things like rent, food and utilities or child care because the cost of child care is very high in our state. When I started to look for child care for my son, it was so overwhelming. Because we are a low income family, we have to carefully consider our ability to pay for the care we want for our son.

I applied for ERDC - however, even after qualifying for it, it has been so difficult to find a childcare provider. Each time I have called I have been told to get on a waiting list. There simply is not enough child care supply, especially for low-income families.

The current system is not serving our current communities' needs. For families like mine, the hoops and hurdles we have to undertake in order to be able to go to work and provide for our family's very basic needs has been so strenuous and stressful. I have often found myself considering not working. However when I look at our financial situation it is just not an option and I feel desperate and frustrated to the point of bursting into tears from it all.

That's why I am urging you to invest an additional \$500 million dollars in the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) program. This critical funding will help address the systemic issues plaguing our child care system, including the lack of availability and affordability of high-quality child care options.

I have heard that there is little to no money to invest in child care in the next budget. I disagree. Oregon has two savings accounts, which according to news outlets are at very high levels. We should use the money in these savings accounts and invest them in programs that will help Oregonians NOW. It should not have to be this hard- having a beautiful baby is something I had longed for for many years. Having a fulfilling life without worrying about our basic needs should not have to be part of this beautiful part of parenting life.

Our state cannot afford to NOT take action and invest as much as we can in child care. Providers should be properly compensated for their work, and families should have access to high-quality, affordable, and culturally relevant childcare. Please make child care a high priority as you make your budget decisions.

Sincerely,
Luz Quevedo