



Chair Hartman, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amanda Orozco, and I am testifying on behalf of Unite Oregon in strong support of House Bill 2593. Unite Oregon represents immigrant, refugee, BIPOC, rural, and low-income communities—families who are disproportionately impacted by the child care crisis.

As a parent, I know the crushing financial burden of child care. I currently pay \$1,500 each month for daycare, a cost that strains my budget and complicates future family planning. Many families across Oregon are forced to make impossible choices between paying for child care, rent, or groceries.

The Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) subsidy program was designed to help families afford child care while working or pursuing education. However, long waitlists, limited outreach, and bureaucratic barriers have made it inaccessible for legal guardians in Oregon. This bill is a crucial step in addressing these issues by requiring the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) to study the impact of these barriers and propose actionable solutions.

One of the most important aspects of this bill is that it will ensure child care assistance is more accessible to legal guardians who need it most. Targeted outreach can help families understand eligibility and reduce the time spent navigating the system. Families shouldn't have to waste hours figuring out complex requirements or face delays that keep them from getting the care they need.

This bill also brings much-needed transparency and equity to the way ERDC subsidies are distributed. By tracking who accesses the program, is on the waitlist, and receives assistance, the state can ensure historically overlooked communities are not left behind. We cannot fully address disparities in child care access without this level of accountability.

Bureaucratic red tape has long been a barrier for legal guardians, and this bill takes important steps to streamline the process. Renaming the ERDC to the Oregon Child Care Affordability Program makes it easier for families to understand what support is available to them.

While this bill doesn't immediately increase funding, it lays the foundation for future reforms. The data gathered from this study will help justify the increased investments in child care that are essential for economic mobility. With affordable child care, legal guardians won't have to



choose between their careers and their children's care. This is critical not only for families but for strengthening Oregon's economy as a whole.

Oregon's families cannot afford to wait any longer. I urge the committee to support HB 2593. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Orozco

Policy Coordinator, Unite Oregon