

To: Ways and Means Committee

From: Mande Campos

Date: 4/25/2025

Co-Chair Tawna D. Sanchez, Co-Chair Kate Lieber and members of the the Committee,

My name is Mande Campos, and I am a community member, former housing program manager with Janus Youth Programs for 4 years, and am now a Renter's Rights Educator with the Community Alliance of Tenants. I'm writing to urge lawmakers to invest in critical child care initiatives that will have a profound impact on families, our workforce, and local economies. Specifically, I strongly support allocating:

\$250 million additional budget allocation to the Department of Early Learning and Care to eliminate the waitlist for Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) and connect 4,000 approved families with child care providers.

\$14 million for HB 2452 to fund Child Care Resource and Referral Directors, ensuring families can find suitable care options.

\$16 million for HB 3008 to continue recognition bonus payments to child care providers and invest in workforce apprenticeship programs.

These investments are crucial to stabilizing the entire child care ecosystem and addressing long-standing issues plaguing our system. By doing so, we can ensure that all families, regardless of income level, have access to affordable and high-quality child care options that meet their unique needs.

In my experience working in housing, I have specifically worked with teen and young parents, predominantly from the BIPOC community (usually the birthing parent). In addition to either parenting and/or being pregnant while facing homelessness or eviction, about 60-70% of our program intakes were also fleeing domestic violence. Financial dependency from their abuser is often a significant barrier for these households to leave, especially because abusers strategically isolate survivors from their friends and family relationships over time. With high costs of rent, childcare and low paying jobs, victims are often forced to return to their abusers. Investing in childcare initiatives helps alleviate a significant cost burden and much needed resource. This then creates safer homes and communities, and allows young families to

heal from their trauma. Regardless of a household's situation, I also believe that investing in families is investing in the health and well being of a prosperous community for us all.

I urge you to allocate these critical funds to support child care infrastructure and ensure that all families have access to quality child care. This investment will have a lasting impact on our communities and our state's future.

Thank you,

Mandee Campos  
Portland