

To: Ways and Means Committee

From: Jennifer Peters

Date: 4/7/2025

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

My name is Jennifer Peters and I am [a parent, community member, advocate, representative of an organization].

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.

As a Preschool teacher I have seen the impact the waitlist has had on the families in my care. Several have had to choose between working to provide for their families or to struggle with one income to be able to provide for their children. As a provider I have lost wages due to families not being able to pay for extended care or summer care without assistance. Without families to pay I don't work because my boss is unable to pay me. As a single parent this puts a huge hardship on being

able to support my own family. So as you can see not being able to provide for one creates harm for many. Please consider supporting our legislation.

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,

Jennifer Peters

Albany