

Testimony of Melissa Sewall
In support of
***LD 1726: An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care for Working Families
sponsored by Senate President Troy Jackson***

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Melissa Sewall. I am a teacher, and I live in Bowdoinham. I'm testifying in support of LD 1726 An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care and Working Families.

I support raising child care educator wages because teachers and undervalued and with education they should be seen as that. They deserve a living wage.

I support Maine developing a cost model tool that better supports our understanding of what it costs to provide quality care and education because child care and early education is too much... to out of reach for a lot of families in the state. I was in that situation when I first started to have children, I have also worked in early childhood for Many years before becoming an elementary school teacher.

I support raising subsidy eligibility for Maine's lower income families because the income subsidy is way to low.

I support ensuring that subsidy reimbursement covers days when children are absent from their program because those children are still counted as enrolled and should be seen as such until they are unenrolled.

I support Maine developing a long term plan to increase investments in child care programs while also increasing subsidy eligibility because all children deserve an education.

I support increasing Head Start eligibility and funding because every child has a right to an education, and the system is incredibly inequitable.

I support providing funding to pay for child care for child care employees because it will help people want to be a child care worker.

I support shortened time periods for determining subsidy eligibility because time matters and could be the difference between working and not working.

I support shortened time periods for child care programs receiving subsidy reimbursement because you can't wait for help running a business that has little profit margins.

Please vote in support of LD 1726,
Melissa Sewall