

Testimony of Allyson Conley
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 Allyson Conley. I am the Director of Spring Point Children's Center, and I live in Standish. I'm testifying in support of LD 1726 An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care and Working Families.

As an Early Childhood Educator for 10 years, the current Director of a well-respected preschool in South Portland, and the mother of a 15 month old, I know firsthand how stressful both securing and operating childcare can be. I began putting my child on wait lists while I was still in the first trimester of pregnancy and still struggled to find an affordable option that would meet my family's needs when my daughter was born. Just this month as a Director, I have had to reject nearly 80 families seeking care for their child for next fall. There are simply not enough facilities, let alone facilities representing HIGH QUALITY care, to support the needs of our community.

Despite families spending tens of thousands of dollars a year on childcare, hardworking educators, including myself, struggle to support their own families, pay for reasonable housing, or have any ability to save for emergency. As the administrator of a childcare that pays higher than average wages for this area I barely make a living wage and my teachers struggle to find places to live that they can afford. 38% of my income is spent on childcare for my own daughter so that I can go to work each day. A system in which parents are paying a significant portion of their salaries and yet workers are not paid a living wage is fundamentally broken.

MAINE WORKS WHEN CHILDCARE WORKS!

Please vote in support of LD 1726,
Allyson Conley