

Testimony of Nicole Hoglund

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 Nicole Hoglund. I am an Early Childhood Education Director and Owner, and I live in Portland. 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 without continued support our state, economy, families and in turn the future of our state and country will suffer.

I support Maine developing a cost model tool that better supports our understanding of what it costs to provide quality care and education because reality is important and currently the state is not making decisions reality based from everything from subsidy to Rising Stars.

I support raising subsidy eligibility for Maine's lower income families because the current subsidy does not reflect actual market rates.

I support ensuring that subsidy reimbursement covers days when children are absent from their program because by constantly creating barriers for state and department of human services, hurt children, families, and parents that want to return to the workforce and be part of the economy. All childcare centers are based on enrollment tuition rates whatever you wanna call, it are based on tuition not on days attended there is no way to run a business. If you only charge parents on days they attend what teacher do you say in any given week sorry you don't get full pay because Johnny and Susie didn't attend this week. It is just not based on reality how the system is currently set up from everything from subsidy to the rising star demands to licensing. Nothing really is reality based and the only people that are really truly suffering are the children.

I support shortened time periods for determining subsidy eligibility because by prolonging approvals, which is a direct result of staff shortages people lose the opportunity and available to take a job offered.

I support shortened time periods for child care programs receiving subsidy reimbursement because there is truly no incentive just barriers for childcares to accept a subsidy. Every other parent pays tuition either weekly or biweekly, and to force childcare programs already receiving a lower rate than what other families pay and then doubling the pain that you feel when you accept subsidy families by prolonging payment periods again is just not dealing in reality. Why would anybody choose this route?

Please vote in support of LD 1726,
Nicole Hoglund