

Testimony of April Rejman  
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 April Rejman. I am a Lead Toddler Child Care Teacher, and I live in Rockport. I'm testifying in support of LD 1726 An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care and Working Families.

Child care teachers have such demanding jobs to care for all children with different needs. Teachers are increasingly being asked to achieve higher learning degrees and certifications in the field, with no adjustment in their pay because of lack of funding. As a result, teachers are stressed and burnt out, making turn over high. Supporting educator wages will help retain people currently in the field of early learning and child care, and hopefully attract more professionals to it.

Developing a cost model tool will show what is and isn't working about the current financial set up, and what a strain affordable child care is for families, teachers, and directors who run centers.

I support raising subsidy eligibility for Maine's lower income families because this will provide more of a level playing field in terms of opportunity to quality child care, making the first years of life a success for a child and their family.

I support ensuring that subsidy reimbursement covers days when children are absent from their program because this covers the cost of enrollment instead of cost of attendance. This helps cover the cost of daily operations, and the staff who is consistently there for child care.

A long term plan supports everyone - the child directly, the child's family, giving parents a chance to work, and the community in turn. This helps keep both family care and centers open and operating, while being accessible to all.

I support increasing Head Start eligibility and funding because Head Start has been around for a while, and it a very viable option for families who have a child with varying needs.

I support providing funding to pay for child care for child care employees because, as a child care teacher who had her child with her at the center, this provides direct support to teachers who work full time. Their children will be supported and also given the opportunity to have quality care. Knowing that there is funding for parents who teach in child care give more incentive to enroll their child, and less stress for them as a parent and a professional.

I support shortened time periods for determining subsidy eligibility because the faster one can determine eligibility, the faster funding can happen and children can be enrolled in needed care.

I support shortened time periods for child care programs receiving subsidy reimbursement because reimbursement helps keeps centers open and operating.

Please vote in support of LD 1726,  
April Rejman

