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Testimony of Jacqueline Stahl before  
the Committee on Health and Human Services  
in support of

**LD 1726: An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care  
for Working Families**

May 10, 2023

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Jacqueline Stahl and I work for the Bath Area Family YMCA. I am also a parent of young children. I support LD 1726: *An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care for Working Families*.

As a parent, it is my absolute pleasure to support LD 1726. This bill is a clear sign of the support and investment our legislative leaders intend for our youngest generation, not just for us parents, but for our entire Maine community.

As we all have heard and know from experience, it takes a village to raise children. When my daughter Rose was born in July 2020, our villages had gone remote... As businesses, including childcare centers, struggled, and closed, parents were let go and faced financial insecurity and instability. I was lucky enough to work for the Y and was granted flexibility to remain working from home off and on while caring for my young children. But many were not. Without childcare, parents were unable to return to the workforce as we all began rebuilding, further contributing to the staffing shortages plaguing all sectors and hindering our state's economic recovery.

Rose remained on several extensive waitlists for more than two years before we were able to find quality childcare, without many ways to give her socialization outside of our home in the meantime. For us parents, this bill represents a sense of relief and assurance, knowing that our children and their education are being prioritized. Comprehensive investment in our childcare sector will ultimately bring peace of mind to all working parents so we can focus on our work and other responsibilities without worrying about the wellbeing of our little ones.

This bill is a true testament to your commitment to investing in our children's futures. It's a bold statement that Maine values the growth and development of our youngest members, and that we will do everything in our power to ensure that they have the best possible start in life.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Stahl  
Bath Area Family YMCA

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