

Testimony of Susan Tripp  
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 Susan Tripp. I am an In-Home After School Care Provider, and I live in Ellsworth. I'm testifying in support of LD 1726 An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care and Working Families.

As a provider for over 35 years, any and all supplemental income support is a help and allows me to focus on helping families and the children in my care, which is why I support raising child care educator wages. I feel appreciated.

I support Maine developing a cost model tool that better supports our understanding of what it costs to provide quality care and education because information is power and provides problem solving opportunities.

I support raising subsidy eligibility for Maine's lower income families because parents work hard. Trying to make everything work when inflation is so high is very difficult. Kids and families suffer.

I support ensuring that subsidy reimbursement covers days when children are absent from their program because it's a trust relationship. Families need to trust the provider will care for their children, while the provider must trust the families to pay for that slot, regardless of attendance.

I support Maine developing a long term plan to increase investments in child care programs while also increasing subsidy eligibility because as an industry, it is in crisis. Families need child care. Children need a safe and caring place to grow. Providers need less regulatory demands that have ruined what was once a great cottage industry. Young mothers used to stay home with their young ones and be able to care for other kids, legally, licensed, etc., Now they have so many regulations, it discourages people to offer their community some home based care. All care doesn't need to be the same, program to program. Parents can decide their children's care whether it is a less regulated more casual program or a regimented center based program dealing with large numbers of children and multiple employees. A simple home-based business has been driven out of existence by over regulation. This problem was avoidable, and should be rectified.

I support increasing Head Start eligibility and funding because early intervention is a proven advantage with all children, affluent or not.

I support providing funding to pay for child care for child care employees because the need for child care is universal and the need for child care workers is now in crisis. Improved wages and support can only help the situation.

I support shortened time periods for determining subsidy eligibility because who doesn't want better efficiency, anywhere with everything?!!

I support shortened time periods for child care programs receiving subsidy reimbursement because I stopped offering subsidized care 20 years ago because working with the state was a nightmare. I can't see where it has improved in that time.

Please vote in support of LD 1726,  
Susan Tripp