

Testimony of Erica Marcus
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 Erica Marcus. I am a parent and an educator, 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 the experiences my children have with their child care educators are invaluable. During this critical developmental period, my kids are learning how to negotiate with other children, self regulate, and interact with the world around them in a way that is caring and thoughtful. We undervalue those who work with this population as compared to those of us who work with others students, despite this being such an important time. Early childcare workers deserve the same amount of financial compensation as all of us.

Childcare is a tremendous financial burden on working families right now, not to mention the challenges of simply finding it. While that is a given, what we don't see is the costs associated with running these facilities, that have caused so many childcare providers to underpay their staff and/or shutter their doors. If we knew the costs associated, we could then do a better job of supplementing at levels that are sustaining.

I support raising subsidy eligibility for Maine's lower income families because given the costs associated with childcare, it seems like for lower income families, it is likely a zero-sum game to even send your kid to childcare and work. All people have a right to earn income, and have childcare proportional to those earnings. Higher earners shouldn't be the only ones who have access to childcare.

Please vote in support of LD 1726,
Erica Marcus