

Testimony of Brittany Foss  
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 Brittany Foss. I am an Educator, Supervisor, and a parent of a toddler, and I live in Plymouth. I'm testifying in support of LD 1726 An Act to Build Maine's Economy by Supporting Child Care and Working Families.

This bill has some great opportunities to help reduce the stress and barriers for many who are working in, or accessing early childhood education. In my role as supervisor, I see the effect that the minimal wages, the long hours, and demanding daily tasks has on the educators that I support. Just this week I have 3 staff who are making the tough decision to leave the early childhood classrooms for a higher paying job- many leaving the field all together. This bill aims to double the monthly wage stipend from \$200 to \$400 for early childhood educators. This increase would help programs to recruit and retain qualified staff that provide care for children and support for families.

Along with the wage stipend the bill also creates a committee to look into the cost of care model for the state of Maine. This would be a great contribution to better understanding the Early Childhood Education field and support a greater community of supporters who can see the true costs that come with caring for our youngest children.

Increasing Head Start Eligibility means that we can serve more children and families. This can only be seen as a positive thing for our communities. I have personally seen how programs like the one that I work in support families in bettering their lives and the futures of their children. Families depend on high quality care where they feel their child is safe and well taken care of in order for them to succeed in their daily lives whether that is at work or continuing their education.

I would be happy to go into more detail or provide more information regarding any of these topics, or any related to this bill. Please vote in support of LD 1726, and show your support for the field of Early Childhood Education. The children, families, and educators desperately need bills like this to give the structures needed to support them.

Thank you!

***Brittany Foss M.S. Ed***

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