

Aurora Bales
WESTBROOK
LD 210

I was recently informed about the budget cuts to childcare support in Maine by my child's daycare, to which I am strongly opposed.

I am a new mom to a sweet 7 month old girl, and a resident of Westbrook . It took over a year and multiple rounds of IUI for my partner and I to conceive her. During this process, we were told multiple times to apply for daycares before we got pregnant, because the demand is so high throughout Portland, and it is often difficult to get into a daycare within 9 months.

Luckily, we were able to find an amazing daycare near us, but not without hours of emailing and searching for one that would accept us in time.

My daughter's daycare is able to provide crucial early development services to children of all walks of life and learning tracks, which I am so grateful for. The employees there are superheroes, providing a safe space for my daughter to learn and grow alongside her fellow classmates, and deserve to be paid fairly and comfortably.

These cuts to supplemental wages and access to childcare for employees would make it even harder to retain and recruit qualified child care professionals, ultimately impacting the quality of care and education for children across Maine. If residents are already struggling to find care, I can only imagine how much worse this will get with the proposed budget cuts.

I was also shocked to hear about changes to the budget for the Head Start programs, as we continue to see more and more families struggle to make ends meet with rising costs and inflation.

I ask you to please reconsider these cuts for the sake of children and families across Maine. Our children and working families who need childcare are the future of Maine.