

Lacey Donle
LISBON FALLS
LD 210

Dear Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee

My name is Lacey Donle, I live in Lisbon Falls, and have been working as a preschool teacher at a child care center in Freeport for about 6 mo. I had to change jobs after a family tragedy this past summer, and I took a \$5/hr pay cut with the job change. I am finding I love working with preschoolers and am seeing the difference in their development even in a few short months.

The Child Care Salary Supplement program allows me to fill a needed role at the center where I work, a role they had been unable to successfully keep staffed for the past two years. Without adequate staffing, the center cannot operate at full licensed capacity, causing limited openings for children needing care.

If the childcare supplement is cut, I don't know if I will be able to continue working at the center, and may need to leave the position and the young children in my care without a teacher, due to the financial burden of low wages in this field.

I am writing to request you Oppose the cuts in the governor's budget to this important supplement, which is estimated to provide an average of \$4,000 per year to each child care worker, and more for those like myself with a Bachelor's and more early childhood education credits.

I receive \$500/mo, or \$6000/yr, plus I am able to care for my own elementary school age child at the center during school vacations.

This summer, my daughter will be attending the center full-time, while I work there. My employer is kind and generous, and is allowing her to attend at no cost, which is costing the child care center \$3,400 for the 10 weeks of summer.

I do financially qualify for support with child care expenses that would help her business stay afloat, however, cuts to the Child Care Affordability Program and Child Care Employment Award have resulted in waitlist of indeterminable length, effectively rendering this program inaccessible to my family and many others.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Lacey Donle (she/her)
19 East Ave, Lisbon Falls, ME 04252