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Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Craig Plourde. I am an appraiser and live in Gorham.

I am opposed to the proposed \$15 million annual/\$30 million biennial cuts to the Child Care Wage Supplement Program. I oppose these cuts for a few reasons. First of all my wife have two young children currently ages 3 and 4 (soon to be 5) and we have been involved with childcare facilities since our oldest was born. My wife and I both work and rely on these services. We have seen first hand the need for childcare services, in the beginning there were very long waitlists just to get into a facility nearby and we were lucky enough to know to be prepared. Prior to the Child Care Wage supplement program we have seen a high amount of staff turnover at facilities our kids have been at. We understand it is a difficult job and providers face the challenge of keeping costs affordable and paying a wage that can retain good employees as it is a very difficult job. In the past few years the cost of daycare has risen considerably and now young families are faced with high child care costs and ever increasing costs of living especially relating to housing. Childcare costs are at a point already where we have had many discussions over the pro's and con's of one parent dropping out of the workforce to cover the cost. We need more investment in childcare. I strongly advocate for universal pre-k, however until that time we need to keep childcare affordable not only to help families in general, but also to keep parents in the workforce.