

Laura Larson
Brunswick
LD 2066

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR LD 2066

“An Act to Establish the Child Care Employment Award”

Senator Henry Ingwersen, Representative Michele Meyers, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am writing today in strong support of LD 2066, “An Act to Establish the Child Care Employment Award.” This bill creates a state-administered Child Care Employment Award that provides childcare subsidies to early educators employed by licensed childcare facilities or family childcare programs, with subsidy funds paid directly to their childcare provider.

This legislation addresses one of the most pressing challenges in early childhood education: the inability of educators to afford childcare for their own children, even while they provide essential care to Maine’s youngest learners. By allowing subsidy awards to flow directly to licensed childcare programs, LD 2066 strengthens both the financial stability of childcare providers and the families they serve.

The bill also directs the Department of Health and Human Services to adopt rules regarding subsidy amounts, waiting list management, quality standards, and limitations, and establishes a full-time position at the Office of Child and Family Services to administer the program.

As the Executive Director of Family Focus, I see daily the financial strain placed on early educators—many of whom struggle to access affordable childcare for their own families, despite working full-time in the field. LD 2066 provides a critical solution by creating targeted financial relief that supports educator retention, childcare stability, and workforce resilience.

Maine continues to face severe workforce shortages in early childhood education. Retaining qualified educators is essential to maintaining high-quality, stable programs across the state. LD 2066 represents a meaningful step forward by investing directly in the workforce that makes childcare possible for families throughout Maine.

For these reasons, I strongly support LD 2066 and respectfully urge the Committee to advance this legislation. Thank you for your commitment to strengthening Maine’s childcare system and for your consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,
Laura Larson
Executive Director, Family Focus