

Kaitie Gilmour
Houlton
LD 1414

Good afternoon. My name is Kaitie Gilmour I'm a mother of 6 and the owner and director of Laugh and Learn Academy in Houlton where we serve 84 families, 20 of which are infants and toddlers. Because of the low ratios for infant and toddler care our payroll costs are exponentially higher than in other rooms. Currently we break even on just payroll costs in our infant and toddler spots. They do not cover any of their admin cost, supplies, maintenance and all the many other costs that come with supporting and providing quality care for our youngest Mainers.

I get calls every day for infant and toddler care. Currently our waitlist for just infant care is around 50 children. The need for those spots is great but from a business perspective it's not feasible to expand those classrooms and in some cases it's not feasible at all.

We have the ability to expand the number of spots that we offer to infants and toddlers if we could make those spots profitable in our childcare center. LD1414 would provide the extra tuition to allow us to explore that option.

Additionally, in a small town where the big employers are healthcare facilities and places of work that offer second and third shifts the need for nontraditional childcare hours is there. We often have parents reach out for non-traditional hours for care and have to turn those families down as we don't currently have the ability to support them. This bill would allow us to explore non-traditional care hours as an option.

Thank you for your time and I hope when you're making your decisions on LD 1414 that you'll consider the statements made by myself and my colleagues.