

Senate and House Representatives

BILL LD 1726

5/10/2023

Augusta, Maine State House

IN SUPPORT

My name is Kerri Brackett, I am first and foremost a parent but I am also the owner/director of Kerebear Child Care. I also am part of the leadership in ECE advocacy and policy group and a trainer for the Maine Roads to Quality I am testifying in favor of LD1726

Have you ever wondered how you were going to support your family? How you were going to get a job if you cant find child care? How you were going to find child care at all? That is the biggest struggle of young families today I am a mother and I cannot imagine the fear these families are facing. I have a family in my care right now that is going through a domestic abuse situation She lost the second income and has to now figure out how she can provide care for her son and also keep a job I have supported her through the process of getting subsidy but the timeline on that can be months Technically, her child care bill is now over \$1000 behind Would your job wait months for you to figure out child care? This isn't the first family I have supported through that process, nor will it be the last These young families are without options and struggling. LD1726 is looking to not only move this process time up but also make it easier Some families are just over the income limits but still unsure how they are going to afford child care on top of rent, a car, food, etc . This bill would also open many opportunities for our families that can just barely afford care The cost modeling piece of this bill will take some of the stress of child care centers who are trying to keep tuition

affordable but also leave a realistic amount for the cost of providing care. The changes from one county to the next in the current model are not working. I am working on a second center in Standish which is Cumberland county and I can change more in tuition based on the market rate than I can my Buxton site which is only a few miles away. This isn't working!

Please help us support these staff and families to make the quality child care that they are receiving affordable and the PayScale comparable to the rest of the teachers.

Kerri Brackett

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