



Joseph Baldacci
Senator, District 9

THE MAINE SENATE
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3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Joe Baldacci, and I am privileged to represent Senate District 9, which includes Bangor and Hermon. I am here to testify in support of my bill **LD 561**, "**An Act to Ensure Subsidy Reimbursements for Certain Child Care Providers.**"

I will keep this testimony brief. As we know, Maine is still suffering from a child care shortage. In order to take steps to address this, we need to make sure that our child care facilities remain open and have what they need to operate.

During the pandemic, many different states implemented new policies about how child care subsidy reimbursement payments were paid to providers. They shifted from basing the subsidy reimbursements on attendance to basing them on how many children were enrolled in a program. Typically, enrollment numbers are higher than attendance, because children can be absent for a variety of reasons, such as illness or vacation. The switch from attendance to enrollment based subsidy payments helped stabilize the child care sector from a pandemic induced collapse.

From a study done by Child Care Aware of America, 82% of the total number of providers that accepted subsidies in January and February of 2020 also accepted them in July and August, indicating they were able to remain open.

By employing this practice here in Maine, I think we can make a positive impact in stabilizing the child care sector and keeping our child care centers open and operating with qualified individuals.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Joe Baldacci