

## Testimony of Mary Pletcher

Before the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee, in support of LD 1652: An Act to Build a Child Care System by Recruiting and Retaining Maine's Early Childhood Educators Workforce.

May 11, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, my name is Mary Pletcher, I am a resident of Waterville, and I am writing to testify in favor of LD 1652.

I am an alumni of the Maine State Parent Ambassador program and a parent of young children. I have had both good and bad experiences with child care depending on the program and the staff. As a parent and an Americorp volunteer at Educare Central Maine, I can see the difference when teachers are supported and have coaching, credentials and degrees. It is a wonderful place for children and has been a great experience for my family. Parents need high quality child care, so we need child care programs to have the resources they need for the teachers and staff that educate and care for our children.

I know many families can't find the child care they need. If Maine wants to grow access to high quality child care, we need to support the child care workforce. Families already struggle to pay for child care. We can't expect them to pay more to raise wages. We need public investment.

Please vote for LD 1652 to help Maine build a child care system and support families by investing in Maine's early childhood educators.