

Testimony of Cristina Salois

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 10, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement, and Business, my name is Cristina Salois, I am a resident of Whitefield and today I submit this testimony in favor of LD 1652.

Having worked in the field of early care and education for over thirty-five years, I have seen the positive impact high quality early care can make at all levels: for a child's development, their family's economic well-being and the stability of the community.

High quality child development programming delivered by trained professionals in safe and healthy environments is what we all want for Maine children. This is an achievable goal. However, all too often, wonderful educators leave the field due to poor compensation and lack of access to professional development. This frequent staff turnover interrupts the continuity of care and the relationships which support optimal growth and development.

LD 1652 will build Maine's economy by supporting its early care workforce and building infrastructure. Through the provision of educational opportunities, scholarships, apprenticeship, and salary supplements, our childcare system can stabilize and thrive.

I feel confident that Maine has the capacity to build a strong, diverse, inclusive system of care to support Maine families and the Maine economy. Now is the time - LD 1652 builds a foundation of quality now and into the future.