

## Testimony of Jennifer Smith

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 Jennifer Smith, I am a resident of Houlton, and I am writing to testify in favor of LD 1652.

As an alumni of the Maine State Parent Ambassador program and a parent of young children, I have experience navigating child care and Head Start in Maine. At a Head Start child care, the program is able to meet the many needs children bring in due to the training, experience, and degrees of their teachers and staff. I think all parents in Maine deserve high quality child care for their children. The teachers and staff are the key to quality, so it is important for our state to invest in them.

I want to see more support for the child care workforce. I care about this because I care about Maine families, the ability for parents to work, and for children to learn and grow in safe and nurturing places.

Please vote for LD 1652 to support Maine families and help our state create a strong child care system.