

Honorable Committee Members,

I strongly support the creation of a childcare workforce recruitment and retention program. The quality of early childhood education is crucial for the development of future generations, and its success relies on the dedicated professionals who care for and educate our children. However, the childcare workforce faces challenges that jeopardize both its stability and ability to provide quality care.

The shortage of qualified workers is a nationwide issue. Many childcare professionals are underpaid, overworked, and undervalued, leading to high turnover, burnout, and a lack of experienced educators. This affects families, particularly low-income and working ones, who rely on affordable, reliable childcare to maintain their jobs and economic stability. The issue goes beyond education; it also impacts economic equity and access to opportunity.

A targeted recruitment and retention program would help address these challenges by offering competitive wages, professional development, and benefits that reflect the value of childcare workers. This would attract new talent and support current staff, improving care quality and children's development. Investing in this workforce is an investment in the future of our children and communities.

A stable workforce would also benefit society by helping families reenter or remain in the workforce, strengthening the economy. By providing clear career paths and growth opportunities, we can raise the status of early childhood education and contribute to long-term social benefits like reduced inequality and higher academic achievement.

In conclusion, establishing a childcare workforce program is essential to ensuring high-quality care for all children, regardless of their background. I urge you to support this initiative to create a more equitable and prosperous society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina Norrie