

February 20th, 2019

To: The House Housing and Human Services Committee  
From: Tiffany Chapman,  
Re: Support of HB 2346, HB 2348, and HB 2024

Dear Chair Keny Guyer and members of the committee,

My name is Tiffany L. Chapman and I live in Milwaukie. I am writing in support of House Bills 2346, 2348 and 2024. I thank this committee for addressing the lack of access to affordable, quality child care.

I have been in the field of education since 1999. 13 years of that time have been in the field of Early Childhood Education. I am a step 9.5 in the Oregon Registry and hold a California Child Development Teacher Permit. In 2014 I helped to open, and was the provider for, a licensed in-home certified center in Portland, OR. My daughter attended another location owned by the same owner. With the 50% employee discount, tuition would have taken half of my paycheck each month, so I applied for ERDC. I was approved but, even though I was receiving ERDC for her to attend, my co-pay still took almost 20% of my income each month. I struggled to provide for my daughter the same quality education that I provided for other people's daughters and sons. The cost of childcare meant that I would often have to take out payday loans just to pay basic bills like rent, electricity, and phone.

In 2015 I began working at a different center and was able to negotiate a discounted rate for my daughter to attend that would be lower than my ERDC copay. I am a highly qualified and experienced Early Childhood Educator and was able to use my privilege to do that. At that point, I stopped using ERDC. However, I often worry about how families who aren't able to do the same are struggling with such high ERDC co-pays when the recommended percentage of household budget going to childcare is 7%. 20% of a family's income is indeed an emergency for low-wage earners who are often one paycheck, accident, or illness away from homelessness.

We can do better. I no longer work in the field of Early Childhood Education, but I plan on applying the great stores of mental, physical, and emotional energy and tenacity needed to survive as a single income mother employed in ECE to fixing our broken daycare system and I hope our electeds will as well. As a beginning step, I hope to see this committee approve a comprehensive approach to address the current crisis in Oregon's Childcare system, as is proposed in HB 2346 for a child care task force, in addition to limiting ERDC parent copays to 7% of family income in HB 2348.

Thanks for the opportunity to give my testimony today.

Sincerely,

Tiffany L. Chapman  
(Miss TLC)