

April 30, 2024
Bethany Bucolo
In Support of H-7251

Dear House Finance,

Thank you for the opportunity to present this written testimony. I am in strong support for **Susan Donovan's bill, H-7251, the Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act.**

Step Up to Wages has allowed me to be less stressed out about financial matters (medical, savings, bills, ect). Not having these issues to deal with makes me a better teacher because I'm more present without as many worries to think about. My co workers are also in better spirits and it has helped the morale of working in child care in general. As previously mentioned- because of the Supplement Program I was able to start a savings account and pay off a medical bill that was hanging over my head . Most of the teachers I work with live paycheck to paycheck and unexpected financial issues have a great impact on us/them. Many people are leaving the Many of us who work in this field are single and live paycheck to paycheck. A financial emergency puts us in debt and it's almost impossible to catch up. Because of the wage supplements we are able to "get ahead" a bit or pay off debt. Not one person that I work with that has received any supplement has ever spent it frivolously- not because they don't deserve to, but because they can't afford to.

Our child care providers are essential workers. They are being underpaid and undervalued. They deserve our investment, and it cannot wait. Please support the **Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act.**

Sincerely,

Bethany Bucolo