

April 30, 2024
Dena Walkinshaw
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.**

This supplement has helped me to feel a little better about the amount of money I am providing for my family. I love what I do, but unfortunately the wages are not anything close to what we should be making. I could honestly choose many other occupations and be financially "better off." I love this profession and hope that we are going to be better compensated, as we are a very crucial part of child development and economic stability for families and businesses. I feel that without this program we are going to continue to see a decline in staffing in childcare. This allows people to find new education options as well as financial benefits. This was a nice little "token of appreciation" for early educators, especially those who have been doing this for many years. I also hope this is a little incentive for all levels of childcare workers to seek higher education opportunities or even just stay in the field as we know the staffing shortages are very serious.

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,

Dena Walkinshaw