

April 30, 2024
Diane Kingston
Assistant Teacher
In support of H-7251

Dear House Finance Committee,

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.**

I have been an early childhood educator for over thirty years. It is a program I strongly believe is important to help the children and families receive the support needed to succeed. We work very hard to provide the best education for young children. However, the pay we receive is very low compared to most educational institutions. _These programs have been a tremendous support to help me over the last few months with financial assistance, the cost of living, and paying for utilities. I have been able to use the funding to help with my educational needs, buying books and taking tests to further myself. This funding is a great support to all Early Childhood Educators.

The Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act will invest \$2.5 million to continue the Child Care WAGE\$ national model program, to provide substantial wage supplements to recognize, reward, and retain qualified and skilled early educators with CDAs, associate's, and bachelor's degrees. This program will end in summer 2024 without new funding.

This act will also invest \$5 million to continue retention bonuses at \$3,000 per year for some early educators, those who are lower-wage, consistent, frontline child care staff, beyond the projected end date in September 2024 to prevent loss of staff/closure of more classrooms and program.

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,

Diane Kingston