

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to testify that the Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act has positively influenced my life as an educator. I have been an educator for over twenty years in the field. Over the years the pay for early educators has improved but not enough to maintain a livable lifestyle. The grants received under these acts help supplement my wages making it possible to live.

Before the grants I was living paycheck to paycheck. I didn't make enough to maintain a healthy lifestyle through my wages. The unhealthy eating manifested into health issues. Today I'm on a journey to better myself by supporting my whole being in healthy ways. Without the grants i will not be able to afford healthy foods, gym membership, medication or co pays for doctors visits.

The grants helped me as an educator gain recognition for the hardwork and dedication i performed day in and out. I was able to supplement my curriculum with supplies to support activities with funds from the grants. My overall lessons plans broaden since i financially could afford the extras needed for activities.

I personally feel valued knowing that legislature believes in the Early Education of RI and its Educators. For years we have endured low pay. The low pay leads to high turnover rates in child care centers leading to sub par early childhood education. Higher turnover rates lead to teacher burnout as educators have to over compensate for the loss of help. We are tired.

Let's do better. Let Rhode Island be the leader in early childhood education. Education starts at the foundation. The foundation being in infancy through pre kindergarten. Each age group looks different but has a curriculum with outcomes and individuality. These educators are

caring and guiding Rhode Island's future leaders.

Please consider passing the Early Educator Compensation Act as RI early educators are hard at work educating the future.

Thank You,

Sarah L. Wheeler

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