

May 20, 2025

Re: In support of H-5196 Child Care for Child Care Educators

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Chelsea strongly supports the Right from the Start Campaign's priority to continue funding the Child Care for Child Care Educators program, H-5196.

Chelsea is a child care administrator overseeing five early learning centers in Rhode Island with upwards of 100 employees. She has noted that "over a dozen teachers" across her five centers are participating in the Child Care for Child Care Educators program and hopes to see it continue. She believes that it has helped with hiring. She stated that many people face a decision between working or staying home to care for their children because they cannot afford child care. This program has allowed her to hire teachers who otherwise would not be able to work. She also has teachers that have transitioned from part-time to full-time positions because they now have child care coverage during the hours that they work. Having more teachers in the early child care workforce enables more classrooms to open which lets more parents participate in the workforce. Chelsea fears that if the funding for the Child Care for Child Care Educators program does not continue then teachers who cannot otherwise afford child care will be forced to leave their teaching jobs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. Please consider voting in support of funding the Child Care for Child Care Educators program, H-5196. The health of our children, families, and economy depend on it.

Story gathered and submitted on behalf of Chelsea by Michaela Keohane, a Rhode Island taxpayer from Barrington and member of the Policy and Advocacy Committee of the Women's Fund of RI.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michaela Keohane".

Michaela Keohane