

5/20/25

Re: in Support of H-5196 Child Care for Child Care Educators Program

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Stephanie, a director at an early childhood center in Warwick, strongly supports Representative Diaz's bill to sustain and expand the Child Care for Child Care Educators program, H-5196.

Due to the low wages and limited benefits offered to early child educators, teachers have been leaving the field for jobs that offer more money such as retail jobs. Hiring and retaining teachers is more challenging than ever. The Child Care for Child Care Educators program is helping to combat the exodus of teachers from the early childhood field.

Stephanie is a director at a child care center in Warwick that has 8 classrooms and approximately 30 employees. She has 4 teachers who are using, or have used, the program, and two more in the process of applying. According to Stephanie, this program has greatly improved teacher attendance and retention, and assisted with hiring new teachers. She stated that her teachers' attendance is better because teachers are not scrambling to find child care for their own children. Their child care needs are provided for during their work hours. She has had some teachers leave to take retail jobs only to return because they couldn't afford the cost of child care and they needed to find child care coverage during evenings and weekends when they were scheduled for work.

The Child Care for Child Care Educators program is helping to fix the child care crisis in Rhode Island. Thank you for considering this testimonial in support of funding the Child Care for Child Care Educators program, H-5196.

Story gathered and submitted on behalf of Stephanie 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