



April 30, 2026

Testimony in support of S-2238

My name is Khadija Lewis Khan, and I am the Director of Beautiful Beginnings Child Care Center in Providence, Rhode Island. For more than 25 years, our program has served children and families across our community, providing early care and education during the most critical years of development.

I am testifying in strong support of S-2238, Senator Murray's proposal to tax the top 1% of income earners in Rhode Island.

Every day in early childhood education, we see the direct impact of economic inequality on families, children, and the workforce that cares for them. We see parents struggling to afford childcare while also trying to pay rent, buy groceries, and maintain stable employment. We see educators dedicating their lives to nurturing children while often living paycheck to paycheck themselves. And we see how underinvestment in essential systems creates instability for everyone except those at the very top.

In July 2025, the federal government cut trillions of dollars from healthcare and SNAP to provide tax breaks for the wealthy. Rhode Island cannot afford to respond to those cuts by reducing investments in the very systems families rely on to survive and thrive.

S-2238 is a fair and necessary response. This proposal would create a 3% tax only on income OVER \$640,000 per year, impacting just the top 1% of earners in our state while generating approximately \$203 million annually for Rhode Island. Those funds could help stabilize and strengthen the systems our communities depend on: healthcare, affordable childcare, public education, food assistance, transportation, and senior services.

As a childcare provider, I know firsthand that childcare is infrastructure. Without affordable, reliable childcare, parents cannot work, businesses lose employees, and children lose access to high-quality early learning experiences that shape lifelong outcomes. Yet childcare programs across Rhode Island continue to operate under enormous financial strain while trying to meet the needs of families in increasingly difficult economic conditions.

We are also facing the reality that Rhode Island is projected to lose more than \$275 million annually in federal Medicaid funding beginning in FY2028. Without new revenue, our state will be forced into devastating choices that will disproportionately harm working families, children, seniors, and vulnerable communities.

I also strongly oppose any attempts to weaken or eliminate the estate tax or eliminate taxes on Social Security income for higher earners. These proposals would primarily benefit the wealthiest Rhode Islanders while reducing revenue we urgently need to maintain essential services.

As someone who works every day with children, families, and educators, I urge you to prioritize policies that strengthen community well-being and economic stability for the many—not just the few.

I respectfully urge you to pass S-2238.

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