

Jamie Plume

From: Sarah <saramos587@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 1:48 PM
To: Senate Finance
Subject: Letter of support for H7794 S2845

[You don't often get email from saramos587@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Good afternoon,

I'd like to start by introducing myself. My name is Sarah Poehlmann I'm a mother of three and live in Warren with my husband 6 year old twins and a 16 month old.

Today, I'd like to talk to you about a program that has had profound and lasting impact on my family but also other families and children, in our community: the Parents as Teachers program.

At its core, Parents as Teachers is built on a simple but powerful idea: the idea that parents are their child's first and most important teachers.

From the very beginning of a child's life, the experiences they have at home shape will how they grow, learn, and connect with the world around them. This program exists to support, guide, and empower parents like myself during those critical early years with their children.

Parents as Teachers provides families with the tools, knowledge, and confidence they need to help their children thrive. Through personal home visits, developmental screenings, and group connections, educators build strong relationships with families. They meet parents where they are—without judgment—and offer guidance tailored to each child's unique needs and stage of development.

It's about strengthening the entire family. It has helped me and my husband understand milestones, encourages positive parenting practices, and provided resources during times of stress or uncertainty. Whether that be through helping us understand our baby's cues, supporting early literacy, or connecting us with families or to community services.

Research consistently shows that children who participate in early childhood programs are more likely to succeed in school, build healthy relationships, and grow into confident, capable adults. It is so important! Equally important is the sense of connection that this program helps families build. When I joined Parents as Teachers in 2020, I was searching for a community. As a parent of one-year-old twins, and a former early childhood teacher I found myself questioning whether what I was doing at home was stimulating and developmentally appropriate for my own children.

During our home visits with Parents as teachers I was pleasantly surprised by the support, insight, and strategies the educators provided. They brought engaging, hands-on, activities that encouraged learning through play. Also, they helped me rebuild my confidence, not just as a parent, but as my children's first and most important teacher.

Fast forward to 2025, and I found myself in a new season of parenting, now with two school-aged children and an infant. Even though I was no longer a first time parent, I was once again searching for guidance, connection, and a sense of community. Through there playgroups in Bristol, my son and I are welcomed by familiar faces and new friendships other families who understand and support one another through their own parenting and learning journeys.

Parents as Teachers reminds me that we are not alone. It creates a space where families can connect, share experiences and insights and grow together. In a world that for myself can often feel fast-paced and isolating, this program offers something truly invaluable: a sense of belonging and connection for myself and my family.

Lastly is like to say investing in parents is investing in children and investing in children is investing in our future. Programs like Parents as Teachers don't just support families in the moment they create stronger, healthier communities for generations to come.

Please pass S2845 to ensure Parents as Teachers and other home visiting programs can continue to enrich the lives of so many families!

Thanks!
Sarah Poehlmann

Best, Sarah