

Testimony Supporting 931, 933, 935, 937 - Wanda Sanabria

Good afternoon Senator McCarty, Senator Berthel, Representative Sanchez, Representative McCarty: My name is Wanda Sanabria, Head teacher of Warburton Day Care Center. I am here today to testify in support of Early Childhood bills raised today to address teacher compensation, tuition forgiveness, expansion of Care4Kids eligibility and reimbursement rates. I have been in this field close to 20 years and I appreciate the Education Committee's concern and commitment to early care and education for families and children.

I believe this is one of the most important fields of work there is. We are in the forefront of teaching - we begin molding these children to become better future learners. I love the work I do. I have learned so much over the many years I have been here, not just for the classroom, but as a parent also. It has been hard on the side of wages - we have gone many years without a raise. My love for what I do keeps me coming back. At one time in my time of working with children I had to leave and go into another form of work. I didn't care for it much, but because of our financial situation, I had to do it. I didn't stay too long at my job, I was very unhappy and missed the time with the children. I did return to Mt. Olive Child Development and was welcomed back. That's when I realized this is where I belong. This is not just a job, it's my calling. I get such amazing gratification in seeing how a child grows socially, emotionally, and educationally. My children came through this program at Mt. Olive, and still speak about the teachers, the food, and the great times they had. The struggle is very real for us as teachers and the parents. Every cent we all make is accounted for - everything around us keeps going up, from food to our bills. But without any raises, we struggle to survive. I see it everyday where many of my co-workers have to find a second job just to make it. Just as the teachers struggle, so do many of the parents. Without many of the programs they would not be able to afford to have good care for their children. I see the stress of having to choose to pay for daycare or bills. This is an everyday struggle for many. With the help of this committee, I believe we can do better for our children who are the future of this state. Don't forget us the workers who provide a very important step in each child and parents life...With the help of this committee, I believe we can do better for our children who are the future of this state. Don't forget us the workers who provide a very important step in each child and parents life. Thank you.