

TO: Senate Committee on Housing and Development
FROM: Sammi Teo, Public Policy Advocate
RE: Support for SB 599 to protect child care providers in rentals
DATE: February 1, 2023



Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee,

Oregon Food Bank's mission is to eliminate hunger and its root causes. We pursue this goal in two key ways: we foster community connections to help people access nutritious food today; and we advocate to change policies that drive hunger and poverty. We have the opportunity to rebuild and emerge stronger so that we can end hunger for good in our communities. This is our moment to embrace our shared values, care for each other and take bold action in support of *all* Oregonians.

Access to child care is linked to economic stability and food security.

Child care is the work that makes all other work possible, and is an underappreciated part of our state's essential infrastructure. Our entire economy is dependent on equitable access to child care. When caregivers who want to work cannot find safe and affordable child care, families are more likely to live in poverty and experience food insecurity. This burden is disproportionately carried by women who provide a larger share of uncompensated care work. **Lack of options for child care is among the many reasons that households led by single moms are nearly 4 times as likely to experience hunger¹ than the general population².**

Home-based child care helps address Oregon's shortage of child care.

Child care accessibility was in crisis before the pandemic and has only gotten worse. Before the pandemic, every county in Oregon was a "child care desert" for at least one age group before the pandemic. **Since 2020, we have seen a loss of 20% of our child care supply.** Today, there are more than 8 kids for every available slot.

Home-based child care is critical to Oregon's child care landscape - they more often provide evening, weekend, and overnight care, infant-toddler care, care in rural and remote communities, and linguistically diverse and culturally specific care.

Many home-based providers operate with the support of their landlords. However, many landlords do not understand the regulation of this type of business. **Child care businesses are**

¹ https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/2022-11/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_2019-2021.pdf
² <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/104656/err-309.pdf?v=3033.9>

actually strong rental candidates – they are required by the Early Learning Division to keep their homes clean, organized, and in good repair. In fact, they receive at least one unannounced “inspection” visit per year.

Despite this, many landlords prohibit their tenants from operating in-home child care, even if the home meets all state standards and inspections for such facilities. This limits tenants’ ability to operate a business, and limits the availability of desperately needed child care.

We urge you to support SB 599 and protect home-based child care providers.

That is why we support SB 599, which would address these concerns. This bill:

- 1) Ensures that landlords may not prohibit a tenant from operating home-based child care, as long as the child care is certified or registered with the Early Learning Division and the tenant has notified the landlord of the use.
- 2) Retains landlord control over any modifications to the home and compliance with rental agreements.
- 3) Allows landlords to require the tenant to secure liability protection in the event of injury of children or guests related to the operation of the business. If a landlord decides to require liability protection, child care providers may select one of three options:
 - a) signed waivers from all parents;
 - b) liability insurance; or
 - c) liability bond.

SB 599 is reasonable and promotes fairness between landlords and tenants. The bill does not require landlords to go out of their way to make the home “licensable,” and allows the landlord to retain control over any modifications to the home. It also allows landlords to require liability insurance, which is not only beneficial for child care providers to have, but is also already a requirement in many states.

Home-based child care providers are often forced to decide between closing their business or moving out of their home. Home-based child care is critical for addressing Oregon’s child care crisis, provides flexible and culturally-specific child care, and allows renters more economic stability. This is why we urge you to support SB 599 and protect home-based child care providers.

Thank you.

