

House Ways and Means Committee
New Hampshire State House
Granite Place, Room 159
1 Granite Place
Concord, NH 03301

Testimony in Support of HB 1477 (2026)- *Relative to the Child Development Finance Authority and community-based childcare partnerships*

Dear Chairman and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Airole Warden. I work in northern New Hampshire, and my work places me at the intersection of childcare providers, employers, and communities trying to solve a shared challenge.

I want to tell you a short story, one that I hear repeatedly across the state.

A business is ready to hire. The job is posted. The applicant is interested.
And then the conversation stops at one question:

“Is there childcare?”

In many rural and seasonal communities, the answer is no. Or, “There used to be.”

At the same time, nearby, a licensed childcare provider wants to grow. They want to open another classroom. They want to serve working families. But they are operating on thin margins, facing high costs, and cannot take on expansion risk alone.

What has helped bridge these two realities is not a single program or directive, but the ability to have sustained, grounded conversations about shared solutions and capacity to support those solutions.

In several communities, businesses and local partners have been receptive to purchasing CDFA tax credits as a way to invest locally in childcare-related efforts. Those purchases have supported grant-funded projects of Evergreen Start, which in turn have created space for ongoing conversations between childcare providers and employers. These conversations focus on feasibility, shared use, and community-accessible solutions rather than one-off benefits.

Right now, we are in ongoing discussions with a large resort employer that relies on both seasonal and year-round workers. The focus is not an employer-exclusive childcare benefit. The focus is whether it is possible to help create additional community childcare capacity that is accessible to their staff and to local families. These conversations are still exploratory, but they are happening because there is a structure that allows employers to engage without needing to own or operate childcare themselves.

What matters most in this work is flexibility. Childcare challenges look different in every community. What works in one region or industry may not work in another. Tools that allow local

partners to explore solutions that fit their workforce, their providers, and their communities are essential.

From an implementation perspective, HB 1477 supports that kind of practical, community-driven approach. It aligns with what we are already seeing on the ground: employers open to participating, providers ready to partner, and communities looking for realistic ways to move forward.

Childcare is not just a family issue. It is a workforce issue. It is a business issue. And it is a community stability issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this perspective and for your continued consideration.