

**SENATE RESOLUTION
1997-8675**

By Senators Kohl, Brown, Long, Jacobsen, Patterson, McAuliffe, Zarelli, Schow, Franklin, Hargrove, Thibaudeau and Kline

WHEREAS, Children are our most precious resource and represent the hope of our state's and nation's future; and

WHEREAS, Our state has thousands of dedicated workers who provide quality child care in homes, centers, and schools. These workers typically earn low wages, receive little or no health benefits, and have limited access to and financial support for training. Nationally, child care teachers average \$11,725 a year; and

WHEREAS, Parent fees are insufficient to fully cover the cost of high quality child care. Many child care programs cannot afford to pay staff living wages and benefits. Yet the demand for high quality child care services is increasing; and

WHEREAS, Centers are experiencing a forty-two percent turnover in staff, statewide, and a thirty-eight percent turnover in staff, nationwide, a year; and

WHEREAS, High turnover in staff affects children's social and language skills as well as their ability to bond and build trust. Additionally, children's cognitive development, academic performance, and communication skills improve with quality child care programs; and

WHEREAS, Child care teachers in centers generally earn one-half the salary of public school teachers with similar levels of preparation and job responsibility and have a much higher turnover rate than public school teachers; and

WHEREAS, High quality staff would be attracted and maintained by adequate staff compensation; and

WHEREAS, Early childhood caregivers, both in centers and family child care homes, have subsidized the provision of services by accepting wages far below the value and importance of their work;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Senate of the State of Washington, That the Senate recognize May 1, 1997, as worthy wage day in the state of Washington, and urges all citizens to recognize the valuable contribution of the thousands of professional child care providers across the state who are the foundation of our state's child care system.