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Media Advisory for Monday, June 19**Contact:** Laura Paskin,  (206) 633-6580 **King County Council Considers Establishing Living Wage for Child Care Teachers***Child Care Ordinance will be before the Council on July 19th*

Seattle, WA -- Starting wages for child care teachers in King County is \$6.50 an hour, which contributes to the problems of high turnover (over 40%) and lack of quality and consistency in the child care field. The Economic Opportunity Institute, the King County Labor Council, AFL-CIO and the Child Care Union project have proposed that the Metropolitan King County Council pass an ordinance establishing an incentive program to reward and encourage teachers in the early childhood education field. The ordinance would professionalize the child care industry, reduce staff turnover and improve quality of services by providing a career path that rewards years of experience and education and gives workers an effective voice in the workplace.

"By supporting childcare teacher wages, the Council is sending a message to working parents that it cares about quality education for all children. An investment in quality childcare will pay off big dividends in the future. Higher pay will mean higher standards and better quality. It will also mean that I, as a teacher of 7 years with a BA degree, will be able to afford to have my own children," said Rachel Kessler, teacher at Wallingford United Methodist Child Care Center.

The ordinance would fund wage enhancements for teachers at child care centers that contract with the County for the care of children from lower income families. King County is subsidizing the children of working low income and lower-to-middle income families. However, it has not addressed the poverty-generating wages of child care workers themselves. A pilot program of wage supplements for child care workers in King County could cover 15-20 centers with 200 teachers caring for 100 children.

For more information contact:

- Rich Feldman, Executive Director of Worker Center, AFL-CIO  (206) 461-6963 
- Lynn Barbee, Child Care Union, SEIU District 925 (206) 328-7275 **to talk to teachers call here*
- John Burbank, Executive Director of the Economic Opportunity Institute  (206) 633-6580 

For more information about the King County Child Care Ordinance please contact Communications Director Laura Paskin at 633-6580 or via email at lp@econop.org.

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