

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter as a result of a call for child care educators voicing their concerns in regard to their wage. I am a mother of two pre school aged children. My husband works at a high pay level for a mining company in our local rural/ mining town of Biloela. We have two struggling child care centres in our community. One of which I work at. My children love attending the centre and I am needed to work to qualify for my children to be offered an opportunity to attend care. Luckily for me I have my advanced diploma in children's services, this means that after paying for both of my children for the day at \$156 I am left with a little over \$30 for my 8hrs of work. My husband earns equivalent for his morning tea break. In our community it is difficult to retain quality staff. To enter into the industry you are required to pay for your own blue card, first aid, CPR, and qualifications, this is even before you have seen whether you enjoy the occupation or not. Less and less young adults are entering the profession due to the cost and low wages, moving out of the family home is not an option at their entry wage, to continue their education in the field will not benefit them in an equivalent increase either. Personally my employee has constantly requested me to extend my working week, as my qualification and experience in the field is valuable to the centre and our community. At \$30 a day this is not an attractive option for my family. At this rate it will not cover my and my children's cost for lunch for the day. The centre link benefits that are offered do not apply for me and if they did still wouldn't amount to much. With the increased rules and work load the turn over of staff does not fit with the governments beliefs of a sustainable environment for the children with consistent happy careers to nurture them into valuable community members for tomorrow. The fact is that child care educators are underpaid and unable to make ends meet resulting in a break down of our community with families unable to work in other sectors due to no places in the child care centres. Miss Gillard may like to re think this before putting another of our communities main recourses at jeopardy along with her taxes to mining. Please take into account the children of tomorrow before sweeping us under the carpet.

Regards P & E Powter