

I thank you for this opportunity. I will address S. 56 first.

Prekindergarten Education Study Committee: While I believe that a study is not necessary as there has been ample data and testimony to show the flaws in moving towards this form of system, I ask that a Family Child Care educator be part of this committee to represent our interest.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program: Section 3 - Even with the raise in the poverty rate not one of my families will qualify for financial assistance. As I understand S. 56 the only Early Childhood Educators who will receive a more livable wage are those who have CCAFP qualified families.

Section 4 - Why does there need to be a difference in the rate depending upon care setting, with Family Child Care receiving the lowest rate? I argue that we provide the same services with less resources.

Section 6 - Will these grants be easily obtainable for Family Child Care Educators and non-cumbersome? Will they be of equal amounts where Family Child Care is not viewed as lesser than?

Section 8 - Nice idea, still not inclusive for all Early Childhood Educator programs. You need to have CCFAP qualified families.

Section 9 - My program is qualified to accept CCFAP families but I have no families that qualify.

Section 18 - As I understand this section of S. 56 I will need to pay more taxes that I will never receive a benefit from? I wonder if I am totally misunderstanding this section.

Another bill I would like to address is H. 187- My program requires immunizations to assure the well-being of myself and the children in my care. I am concerned with the wording of this bill should I choose not to enroll a child whose family has chosen this exception. Where does my exclusion fall in violation of the Discrimination Act? Could wording be added to address this?

Challenges for Family Child Care Educators:

Many bills that relate to Early Childhood Education refer to National Association Education Young Children (NAEYC) program accreditation, this accrediting body does not offer accreditation to Family Child Care. The National Association Family Child Care (NAFCC) is the accrediting body for Family Child Care. With this being said, any bill that calls for NAEYC accreditation is automatically excluding Family Child Care from being included.

The grant system is does not always make it possible for Family Child Care to apply. Many require a not-for-profit status; Family Child Care does not fall under this requirement. The disbursement of grants; many times are disbursed based upon # of children. This puts Family Child Care at a disadvantage as we will are only allowed 6 full time children and 4 school agers, no more than 10 children.

From talking to other Family Child Care Educators I hear them say they just want to be treated with the same respect as Centers. Using inclusive language in bills could go a long way in assuring this level of respect.

Again, thank you for this opportunity!

Sincerely,

Laura

Laura Butler

Imagination Island Child Care