

Ellen Drolette
Sunshine Daydream Child Care
1085 Pine Street
Burlington VT 05401
tezd@myfairpoint.net

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Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give my testimony about why I oppose child care unionization and how it will have a negative impact on my small business. I am currently caring for children as well as teaching a group of New Americans from Nepal about opening up child care programs that are culturally competent and allow children developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn and grow. I wish that I could be there in person to share my story and views on my opposition. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

I have been running a family child care program for 20 years this month. Sunshine Daydream is a nationally accredited child care program through the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). I also am a 5 STAR child care program and have been since the STARS inception in Vermont. I am a mentor for other child care providers helping them through STARS and other quality enhancing activities for their program. I am passionate about children having quality care.

My business has been successful and has allowed me many opportunities to interact with my elected officials on various issues over the years. A few instances come to mind. The Challenges for Change panels that were formed as a way of addressing the systems changes in the State of Vermont allowed for direct conversations with many of the states elected officials. When I have had questions that I needed some immediate answers on I was able to turn to Reeva Murphy and get a response in a manner that was professional and courteous. With a union these encounters would be impossible. I fear already for the fact that the union will not share my views or opinions, but yet I will have to join IF I care for children who receive subsidy. Should I HAVE to join a union if my views are vastly different AND if I don't agree with their stance on issues or possibly be forced not to take the children that are needing the highest quality care and are in the greatest need because my philosophical belief of not joining the union would be compromised?

Currently I do not have any families that receive financial assistance, if I did-those parents would pay a small co-pay to meet the weekly tuition. A raise in the financial assistance program (that you have the power to make) would allow them to pay a smaller co-pay, but as many pro union supporters will tell you that they deserve a raise.....I fail to understand how this will give them (or me) a raise. If a person runs a business, a sound business that has a cash flow then it will make sense to them that this is not the case-we would have to pay out money in dues. I do not run my business as a hobby and while I do it because I love relationships and nurturing young children, I also need to make a living. I will then end up paying union dues and essentially losing money not gaining money. Is it all about the money? No. The bill will also not guarantee a raise in the Financial Assistance Program.

Traditionally unions were formed so that workers could have better working conditions, it allowed them to have bargaining over such things as hours, environment and more. I support unions for those that

work in fields that warrant this type of negotiation. As small business owner, I make decisions about my professional development, my hours, my conditions, and the tuition I charge.

I have a super strong voice. I believe in advocating when you believe in a cause. I believe everyone has the right to opinions and views. I believe that as I elect officials, pay taxes and run a business that I should be able to continually be able to have conversations with my individual voice, not a collective bargaining unit who does not understand me or my business.

Thank you for taking the time to listen and consider the negative impact that this will have on my business.

Sincerely,

Ellen Drolette