

## Rebecca Buck

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**From:** Kay Curtis <curtisk@together.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 15, 2016 5:53 PM  
**To:** Richard Sears; Alice Nitka; Theresa Utton; Rebecca Buck; matrieber@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony on CCFAP

I have been a childcare provider in Brattleboro for 15 years.

My workweek begins at 5am and ends at 5pm with twelve children in my home five days a week. We are open year round.

Wednesday on my day off I go to IEP meetings for the special needs children, meet with parents, and catch up on paperwork.

Weekends I buy the groceries for the 240 meals I provide for the children each week and do the paperwork for the federally assisted food program and the childcare financial assistance program for an additional 8 hours.

At least one night a week I go to a two hour training to keep my five STAR rating in place. This maintains the vital 20% discount for the low-income families in my program that keeps my program afloat.

80% of the families in my program qualify for state assistance.

In real life this means we have a three-year old child who is homeless and lives in a shelter.

We have three children who live in public housing.

We have seen two of our families escape house fires and loose their belongings.

Two of our mothers are in methadone treatment programs for addiction to heroin.

Vermont has a problem of multi generational poverty among young families and having children and their parents connected to a child care provider who offers a safe and nurturing environment each day is an essential strategy for interrupting this cycle.

We have two children with special needs. This means we pay for a 1:4 ratio instead of the 1:6 which is required to keep our program working.

We are currently arranging transportation for two children whose families do not own cars and cannot make it to school in the cold.

We have five children whose subsidy does not cover the cost of care and cannot pay the difference and our program must be prepared to absorb the lost revenue.

Over the years we have allowed families to trade childcare for painting, carpentry, and electrical work in order for their children to stay in the program.

**We already have a situation where there is not sufficient funding to cover the services we provide for families.**

The staff of dedicated teachers that I work with are paid more than at other programs but they also have difficulty providing for their families and keeping their cars reliable through the winter.

It is clear that for the vital services we provide we are being paid less than it takes to make it all work.

Level funding is a cut in funding since the numbers of new families seeking care is on the rise. The cost of my five employees and the food we provide for the children increases each year.

The required tasks we are asked to complete to deliver quality care increase each year. Programs that begin as incentives lose the incentive money and then we are forced to provide the extra service without compensation.

If there is a cut in funding for children we can expect that it will tip the scales and make providing the quality care our children need impossible to deliver. Already in my short tenure in this field I have seen the best teachers in my community quit and seek better paying jobs. Next year I will be on that list.

**I hope you will do everything possible to support full funding for this important work for our next generation.**

Thank you!

Kay Curtis

Happy Hands: A School for Little People

Brattleboro, VT.

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