

To Whom it may concern-

I am writing this email to express my great concern regarding Bill S. 119 that was recently presented. It is my understanding that should this Bill pass, Registered Home Care providers would have to close if the director does not possess at minimum an Associates Degree.

I am here to say that passing this Bill would be devastating to the Vermont children and families who access childcare with a registered home provider. The impact of this Bill is alarming with a predicted 33% of registered homes needing to close should this Bill pass. When we consider this with the knowledge that 52% of childcare is home-based providers we are looking at catastrophic impacts state wide.

Since 2018 nearly 180 childcare programs have been lost. As a state we can not afford to tax the young Vermont families anymore than we already have. If we strive to make Vermont a place where young adults want to grow their families then we have to ensure they have access to the resources that allow them to do so and we have to create space for loving, nurturing and caring providers to do their best work. This Bill is restrictive and quite frankly it infers that people who have not obtained a higher level of education are not able or qualified to do this job; a fact that is simply not true. Registered Home Care providers routinely engage in continuing education, college level curriculum and hours of training annually to maintain their registered status

As a Vermont educator myself, I can not tell you how impactful quality early childhood care is in preparing children to have successful academic careers as students. This Bill passing will have a ripple effect that we will see for years to come in our students.

Please consider the significant impacts this Bill would have not just on a large number of providers losing their income but also on the hundreds if not thousands of young families in Vermont that rely on registered home-based care and the programs these home-based care centers can access to allow child care in Vermont to remain safe and affordable.

Thank you for your consideration and for voting with the thousands of young Vermont Children in mind.

Respectfully,

Nichole Wehman
Mother of two children who access Registered Home Care
School Counselor