

Good Morning,

I am writing to ask you to defeat bill S.119.

I am a registered home childcare provider in Waterbury Center. I have been providing high quality care for over 32 years. My husband, Steve, and I have raised two children in our home. They are now 20 and 21 years old. I was on the board of our elementary school's PTO for 6 years, 3 of which I was President. I have built on my high school education over the years by enrolling in college courses through CCV. As well as, completing more than the required 15 hours of professional development annually for CDD (Child Development Division). However, I do not have a degree.

I love my profession, I love the relationships and connections that I have built over the last 32 years. Helping families raise their children is my passion.

I, like many providers, feel like this bill would cause many home providers to close their doors. And, childcare centers would have an even harder time filling open positions. Thus, further exacerbating the childcare crisis we have been experiencing for the last 10 (or so) years.

VTAEYC's push for this bill shows how disconnected they are with the majority of providers in our state. My local Provider support group has 11 members. 9 of which have stated that they would not continue to jump through hoops to stay registered or licensed. That removes at least 18 infant spots, 36 toddler/preschool spots, and 36 school aged spots from our community. Several other providers have shared the same sentiments on social media.

I will make a few points to support my opinion and statements:

1. School education is NOT superior to experience.
2. There are many providers who open their homes to additional children while they are home raising their own. Passing this bill would eliminate that possibility, therefore, further exacerbating the childcare crisis.
3. Many providers work more than 50 hours a week, while raising their own children. How will they find "extra" time and energy for college courses?!
4. Licensed and Registered Childcare Providers already have regulations and oversight. We have annual, unannounced compliance visits. We are required to complete 15-21 hours of professional development annually. We have to submit personal and professional information annually to CDD.
5. Having a degree and oversight by SOS does not make a provider more qualified or better at their profession. EVERY SINGLE profession has varying levels of quality, a degree has no bearing on that. And, having to register with the Secretary of State does NOT prevent the low quality professionals from doing business. As a matter of fact, just this morning, there is a news story by WCAX, which updates the story of a Contractor who collected money from clients and did not complete work. Contractors are required to register with the SOS office.....proving my point that this requirement does not necessarily protect consumers.

In closing, I am pleading with you to think of this from every angle. Ask yourselves, does this bill support the MAJORITY of childcare providers in our state? Does this bill help end our current childcare crisis? Does this bill create safer childcare? My educated answer is, NO!

I am in contact with many providers who support my statements. Please vote NO on bill S.119. Please reach out if you have questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Sherrie James
Registered Home Provider