February 20, 2015

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Education and Innovation Policy Committee:

My name is Kristin Lynch Chavez and I have been a licensed family childcare provider in Edina for the past 23 years.

I am writing to voice my extreme opposition to the HF46 bill for a variety of reasons:

1. Universal Preschool is a movement in direct conflict with research that continues to amplify the importance of early childhood play-based learning environments, like family child care, that support children’s interests and natural curiosities with time to explore and experience learning at their individual pace and level of development.
2. Universal Preschool does not address the need to fund research that specifically cites in what type of care setting the children who are not prepared for kindergarten have been in order to appropriately target funding.
3. Universal Preschool will significantly impact the sustainability of the licensed family childcare profession. HOW CAN MY IN HOME CHILDCARE COMPETE WITH “FREE?” There is already a shortage of providers for the infant through age two age group and this will only worsen as providers like myself close down. **Losing the four year olds in my childcare will likely force me to close since my business model can’t survive with less than 6 children**.
4. In order to stay afloat it will undoubtedly force a market change that will negatively impact and create a financial burden for families seeking care for children birth to three as family child care programs such as mine will be forced to raise rates to earn a sustainable operating income.

In addition, **I strongly oppose this being lumped together in the Omnibus bill,** where it won’t receive the full scrutiny and debate it deserves.

Sincerely,

Kristin Lynch Chavez