



April 11, 2016

Dear Chairman Dean and Esteemed Members of the Health and Human Services Finance Committee,

My name is Hollee Saville and I have been a licensed family childcare provider in St. Michael for 11 years. I have also worked in centers and public preschool and kindergarten programs. I am a trainer, consultant, and mentor for early childhood professionals and have a Master's in Early Childhood Education. I absolutely love caring for children, sharing that love with families, and advocating for providers. For all of these reasons, I implore you to support HF3433.

As you are aware, there is a severe shortage of child care options for Minnesota families, especially those looking for infant care. The number of licensed family child care providers has dropped from 12,000 in 2011 to only 9,122 in 2016. This shortage not only reduces accessibility of care, but increases costs for families. The exodus of quality providers—many of whom have been providing loving care for 10+ years—is due to several factors, but the main culprits are over-regulation and asinine requirements that are not protecting children and are harming providers. From increased, redundant training requirements to the amount of paperwork and time spent on completing paperwork, providers feel that a significant amount of their time and energy is spent the business side of family child care instead of on the children...who are the reason we are in this profession.

This bill would streamline services and require more training for county licensors—especially since funding was allocated for it in 2013—to correct licensing inconsistencies. This is the most common concern I hear from fellow providers. Many licensors still do not understand that we are governed by state statutes, not county licensing regulations. Providers also should have the opportunity to discuss possible correction orders with their licensors instead of being blindsided by them weeks after what they thought was a perfect licensing visit. Many family child care providers contact me with questions or concerns about licensing or their licensors and ask me to contact DHS or talk with their licensor for fear of retaliation. This bill would give them a direct contact at DHS and would likely resolve many issues. It would also alleviate the workloads of other child care licensing staff.

The proposed task force has the potential to address the myriad concerns and suggestions from family child care providers and families who are struggling to find care. I know that these issues cannot be solved overnight, nor in one brief legislative session, but a focused task force can research the child care shortage and burdensome regulations to find solutions to these problems.

Please listen to family child care providers and families across the state regarding child care accessibility and affordability and vote yes on HF3433. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

Hollee Saville  
Licensed Family Child Care Provider