

HF3721

I am Concerned that we are creating a Government Run, Centralized Child-rearing society. With children as early as 33 months to start in school run pre-schools; when will mothers and fathers have the opportunity to bond and develop attachments to their children? Those early years are essential for a healthy family dynamic. Those early years are essential for a healthy development of the child in questions. Is continued encouragement for earlier and earlier separation in the best interest of the child?

Sara Bertschinger

Pine Island MN

LEAD & CARE

Association of Family Child Care Professionals



Partnering with Providers, Supporting Family Child Care Businesses

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To: Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee

Date: March 12, 2024

RE: HF3721 relating to education finance; allowing school-age care programs to provide preschool care;

Mister Chair and Committee Members:

My name is Cyndi Cunningham. I have been a Licensed Family Childcare Provider in St. Paul for 26 years and am the current Public Policy Chairperson for Lead & Care (rebranded Minnesota Childcare Provider Information Network, MCCPIN), a 501c3 sitewide association for Licensed Family Childcare Providers.

I am testifying on behalf of licensed family child care providers and **continuing to** call into question the impact of this bill on the child care industry and the quality care our children deserve.

The lobbyist working on this bill and I had exchanges of information and a meeting to attempt to reach some agreement on this bill.

We did not reach agreement as the basis that we believe this bill continues to be flawed.

The delete all amendment changes the wording to 'meet their intent' of those moving this forward to be able to access levy money for pre-school age special ed children in school-based care.

The unintended consequences are clearer with the original language, the effect is still the same:
expansion of community education school-based programing to include preschool children.

The need for **quality care** has been repeatedly presented by this committee, these programs do not and cannot be evaluated on a quality-of-care system.

These programs have little to no standard of training for staff or a level of care expectation. I asked and was told that they may or may not be Certified Centers. So, the standard is potentially even less regulated than Certified Centers. 245H

This expansion will do little to provide safe & quality care to our littlest and most vulnerable.

FCCs are the affordable care setting. We are also the best fit for cultural connection and most critically, continuity of care. When a child is dropped off in my program I am the greeter and at the end of the day the care provider who turns their child back to the parent with the report of the day.

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The expansion of school-based child care will dynamically impact availability of care overall care. This is a quick fix for communities. Where will children go on holidays and summers? Family Child Care will not be sustainable and be available for these critical days.

Please do not expand the reach of the school-based program for younger than kindergarten.

Please, do not move this bill forward and instead find ways to find ways to support, not diminish, licensed family childcare.

Cyndi Cunningham

Public Policy Chairperson, Lead & Care