

TO: Human Services Committee

DATE: March 6, 2007

RE: Raised Bill No. 7302, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RATES PAID TO PROVIDERS UNDER THE CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM.

Members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Carolyn Thompson. I run a licensed in-home day care in Bridgeport.

I urge you to support Raised Bill No. 7302, **An Act Concerning The Rates Paid To Providers Under The Child Care Subsidy Program.**

I sometimes feel that people don't fully appreciate the role an in-home day care provider plays in the life of a young child. Every day is a day that children are learning and growing. Although I am paid to watch children during the week, I find my house full of children even on days that my daycare is closed. On Sunday, I teach preschool and Sunday school at West End Tabernacle CME Church in Bridgeport.

I am not a babysitter but a teacher. I take that job very seriously and have my Child Development Associate Degree (CDA). It is not required that in-home day care providers pursue a CDA, and many don't because of the expense, but I feel that the more educated I am the better I can educate the children I care for every day. In my day care, children learn their names, colors, shapes, and ABC's. As soon as I see a child pick up a crayon, I begin teaching. I am doing the best I can to prepare young minds in my community to be successful individuals.

After 15 years as an in-home day care provider I believe I should have access to a fair wage and a reliable subsidy program. My wage is low to begin with, and often the parents don't have enough money to cover the Care 4 Kids co-pay,

reducing my earnings even more. I am forced to decide between watching their children for free or for less than my weekly rate and not watching their children at all, leaving them unable to work.

If we are to have a child care program that works, we must have a subsidy program that provides financial security to providers and uninterrupted access to child care for families. Raising the subsidy rates will do just that. I know we can do better here in Connecticut. Please support Raised Bill Number 7302.

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