

Date: March 6, 2007
To: Human Services Committee
Re: **RB 7302, AN ACT CONCERNING RATES PAID TO PROVIDERS UNDER THE CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM**
Position: Support

Members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Claudia Duran and I live in New Haven. For four years I have been taking care of children in my home. On this occasion, I am writing to you in support of **RB 7034, AN ACT CONCERNING RATES PAID TO PROVIDERS UNDER THE CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM**

I want to let you know a little about my functions and the support that I give to many families in the community. As a family day care provider, I get up very early in the morning to receive the kids whom I care for and so their parents can go to work reassured in the knowledge that they have someone in whom they can trust their kids. During the day I watch six children at a time between the ages of three months and five years. I provide them with nutritious meals, play with them, do age appropriate activities, and teach them their colors, their letters, and good manners. The kids spend between eight and nine hours a day in my home and at times I become their substitute mother and educator while their biological parents work.

I love my job, I like taking care of kids, and one learns something each day from them since they are all different. I change a diaper, prepare a bottle of milk or I read a book: these are many of the activities that I do so that "my" kids (as I call them) are comfortable and well cared for. Although it's true that the parents pay me to take care of them, something no one can pay for is the affection and love that I give them. I've cared for kids from three months old until they are ready to go to school.

Many people believe that this is an easy job, but they don't think about the responsibility that one takes on caring and educating the sons and daughters of others for the rather low pay that the state provides. Many times the parents have to pay out of their pocket, it's left to me to pay for

food, books, toys, supplies for cleaning, learning materials, the rent, the bills for basic services that keep going up, etc. These expenses don't permit me to pay for medical insurance since insurance is too expensive when one doesn't work for a company and to take care of kids or do any job, one must be in good health. The parents count on my services so that they can go to work. As a human being I am not exempt from getting sick but the medical costs are very expensive and what I earn is just enough to survive and not for paying large medical bills and hospitals.

Another difficulty that so many of us parents and providers often face is that the parents find it difficult to pay for childcare so they apply to Care 4 Kids; but their applications are rejected. Others, when they are fighting to get approved, the providers have to wait for weeks and up to months to receive the pay from this entity. The process is very slow and we live off this job. If Care for Kids takes a lot of time to process the payments to us, our bills cannot wait to be paid until they send us the payment. Many times I have thought about quitting caring for kids because of such difficulties that come up but I think how it would affect many families to left without my services. It is past time that the rates were increased. Please support of RB #7302.

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