

TO: Human Services Committee

DATE: March 13, 2007

RE: Raised Bill No. 1382 An Act concerning Professional Assistance to Persons Providing Child Care Assistance

Dear Senator Harris, Representative Villano, and Members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Bertha Pleasant and for the past 16 years I have run an in home daycare in Bridgeport. I urge you to support Raised Bill 1382 for several reasons.

First I would love to do more for the children such as take them on field trips to museums in the area with other childcare providers but I cannot afford to do so. If Bill 1382 is passed, then grants will be available according to section 2a for networking and collaborative endeavors with other child care providers. I would also like to buy more toys and educational materials if grant money is allotted to in home child care providers.

Secondly, I cannot afford to pay for quality health insurance. I am widow and when my husband passed I lost my health insurance. Because I am self employed, the prices to pay for my own health insurance is too high, therefore I currently have no insurance. This job is so rewarding, but many times I feel unappreciated. I open my home at 6:30 am and close at 6:00pm. I would like to see an increase in the rates of the Care 4 Kids program for the parents as well as providers making at least minimum wage.

I support joining with fellow licensed and unlicensed providers to raise standards. By gaining a greater voice in decisions affecting childcare we can reduce turnover and stem the loss of experienced providers, and continue consistent care for children by negotiating fairer wages, affordable health care, and opportunities for training for home based providers. Every single day I get calls to see if I have any vacancies in my daycare and I do not. In my 16 years, I have never had an open space because I take pride in the service I provide.

I urge to support Bill 1382. Allow providers to negotiate with the state and to have an input on the development of early childcare in CT. Childcare providers need a united voice.

Bertha Pleasant
2445 Madison Ave.
Bridgeport, Ct 06606
203-372-4019