

**Date: March 13, 2007**

**To: Senator Harris and Members of the Human Services Committee**  
**From: Claudia Duran, Family Day Care Provider, New Haven**  
**Position: Support**

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 1382, AN ACT CONCERNING PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS PROVIDING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE***. This bill would help me to obtain health insurance and continue to provide daycare in my 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.

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.

Many family daycare providers in the home are sure that with your help we can change things for the better but we need your support to have a union. Permit us to have a voice and representation to make the system work better. We are currently denied the right to choose representation. There are already other states where the providers have gained representation and they have increased incentives, they have a medical plan and they feel motivated to stay with their work with children. Working together as part of the union is a good way for us to resolve issues and raise standards. I ask you to give us the freedom to choose representation by supporting RB #1382.

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*Translated by Eda diBiccari, SEIU Local 2001*