

Human Services Committee

March 6, 2007

Raised Bill No. 7302

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE RATES PAID TO PROVIDERS UNDER THE
CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM.**

My name is Naomi Mitchell and I am a licensed in-home daycare provider in Hartford.

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

I began working as an in-home day care provider in 1996, at first, caring for my grandson Don. My day care has grown and I now watch six children. The youngest, Timmy, is 1 year old and the oldest, Rochelle, is 4 years old. The work is challenging. These are six different children, six different backgrounds, and six different sets of rules at home.

An in-home day care provider has none of the security of a worker in a daycare center. We do not have a guaranteed wage or a predictable paycheck. I want to provide the children with positive experiences that will help them grow into strong, healthy adults. Three years ago I would take the children on trips to places like the Mystic Aquarium. With the rising costs that we all face, I can no longer afford to do this. My overhead -food, utilities, books, toys, etc. – comes out of my pocket. In addition to these costs, I pay \$115 a month for health insurance through AARP and have no access to dental care.

There are difficulties for the parents as well. The high cost of childcare – and the co-pay built into the child care subsidy system - is a burden for many of the families I serve. The parents who bring their children to my in-home daycare rely

on me, and when the system breaks there is no safety net. If they can't afford childcare, they can't work.

The problems that in-home day care providers and the families who rely on Care 4 Kids face amount to a childcare crisis in Connecticut. The work that I and all other in-home day care providers do is important and special, and we must act now to make sure that childcare is available to those who need it. With increased subsidy rates we can ensure access to childcare and improve the quality of care for the children and families we serve. I urge you to support Raised Bill No. 7302.

Naomi Mitchell

Hartford, CT