

**TO: Labor and Public Employees Committee**

**DATE: February 15, 2007**

**RE: Raised Bill No. 7034, An Act Concerning Collective Bargaining Rights For In-Home State Subsidized Day Care Providers**

Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Madeline Perez. I live in Manchester and I run a licensed in-home child care center and presently care for seven children.

I urge you to support Raised Bill Number 7034, **AN ACT CONCERNING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS FOR IN-HOME STATE SUBSIDIZED DAY CARE PROVIDERS.**

The work of in-home child care providers like me makes the work of many others possible. I provide a positive, secure environment for seven children while allowing their parents to work and to support their families. There is no alternative care for these children. If I am unable to work due to illness or for any other reason, the parents of the seven children under my care are unable to work as well.

As a state subsidized day care provider, I do not have access to health insurance. I receive periodic medical coverage through the State-Administered General Assistance (SAGA) medical program, but even that program is normally unavailable to me because I usually do not meet the income requirements. In fact, I have had medical coverage for only two six month periods in the past three years.

The failure of the state to provide health insurance to in-home state subsidized day care providers is a big problem for me because I am diabetic. The insulin, pills, and testing supplies I use to control my illness cost me over 200 dollars per month. Buying my medication is a huge burden to me and it makes it even harder to afford educational materials and resources to give kids the high-quality care they need. This is a problem for a lot of family child care providers, but without a voice to work together with the state, providers have no way to address our issues.

Granting us the freedom to collectively bargain with the state, as child care providers in Illinois and Washington State already do, will raise standards for all child care providers and for the children and families we serve. No one knows how to improve the child care system like those of us who care for children every day. I urge you to support collective bargaining rights for in-home state subsidized day care providers.

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