

SB 1106: Establishment of the Department of Early
Education and Child Development Act

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Iris Heider, Family Child Care Provider

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My name is Iris Heidar. I am a daycare provider in the city of Hartford CT. I have done this very rewarding profession for over 25 years. The last ten of those years have been right here in Hartford.

I began doing day care in order to be a stay at home mom for my now 12 year old son. There are many many rewards to this job. My favorite being the salty, sticky warm hugs and kisses I get from the children I am fortunate to have in my care.

I get to watch them grow from cute, cuddly, most times sweet smelling infants into fine young well mannered good reading and counting kindergarten students. We are told not to get attached to our children but I have found that in order to do this very demanding job it is in our best interest to be attached to them as it helps in being "mommy" away from real mommy. I have and still grow to love them truly as if they are my own, and would have it no other way. Many other providers will identify with me on the countless times we are actually called "mommy" by the children in our care.

The service we provide is a very important one as it facilitates often times young mothers with the opportunity of going out and bettering themselves, be it with employment and or schooling. They are able to do this knowing with confidence that their precious child is in good loving, patient hands. Daycare providers do this because of our love of children.

Many of us are in search of more creative training in perfecting our profession, thus enabling us to better do what we do for the children in our care.

As we now know the more things a young mind is exposed to in the world the more intelligent that child becomes. There is a need for providers to be able to get them out to museums, theaters, libraries, fire stations, bakeries, etc. If you could see their little faces and hear the excitement in

their voices after such field trips have been experienced you would see why it is important to make this part of the daycare curriculum.

As a family child care provider I face many challenges.

Among those are outdated training, regulations, low rates under the Care4Kids program.

It is frustrating to send and resend faxes and other information over and over again. The Care4Kids program needs to modernize their whole system.

It's clear to me that if family child care providers had a voice with the state, we could fix many of those problems, and raise up the child care profession so that every child's spark of potential would be lighted.

With a voice with the state, we could help design better training to give providers the skills and ideas for better early learning curriculum.

With a voice with the state, we could advocate for a rate system that would allow experienced child care providers to continue in their profession and support their own families.

With a voice with the state, we could troubleshoot problems that take providers away from children's learning and keep us on the phone, paperwork in hand.

This bill SB 1106, Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Early Education and Child Development, will give us that voice, through our union, and will truly make family child care providers partners in improving early education and learning throughout Connecticut.

Family child care providers like me want to do more, and we can do more, and with SB 1106 we will do more! Thank you!

860-560-9604, cell # 860-983-6771