

March 13, 2012  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
Testimony to support collective bargaining  
Senate Bill 352

I'm Karin Reed, a licensed childcare provider in Hartford. I've been providing care for 27 years through the Department of Social Services. Right now I have 10 kids, but I don't have them all at once. They're on different time frames.

I have been working to form my childcare providers union since 2007. I have gone to monthly union meetings and testified in person at the Capitol, where I needed to bring two small children with me. I can't make Tuesday's hearing because I work between 6am and 6 or 7pm, and need to be here to get my after school kids off the bus.

Now that providers have won our union, it's time to make improvements with Care4Kids. For instance, Care4Kids sits on submitted information for 15 days before processing it. If paperwork is missing or not received, we aren't informed, and it makes our paychecks late. Every time they get our paperwork, they should process it, not sit on it. They should process paperwork and paychecks every day during a pay period. We also need direct deposit. The people who work at Care4Kids have a clear date when they get paid. Why can't we? We work hard too.

We also need to be able to reach our liaisons. Why do I always have to leave a message on the recorder that takes 3-5 business days to be returned, if it is returned at all? I don't even try to talk with my liaison anymore; I just talk to the customer service person who answers the phone.

As providers who need to get paid, we should get faster notice of approved applications. Right now it takes a whole month. It makes no sense that it takes so long. I don't take parental co-pays because the parents can't afford them. If the parents are denied, I end up not getting paid for my work.

The quality of Care4Kids has gone down over the years. Now is the time to make improvements. Negotiating a contract between our union and Care4Kids is the best way to make those improvements for us, the parents and the children we provide care for. If we have more stability and access to resources, we could provide better quality care. Please vote YES for SB 352.

Karin Reed  
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