

Date: March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

To: Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and Members of the Labor  
Committee

Regarding Senate Bill 352

From: Rhonda Butler, Branford Family Childcare Provider, Owner/Operator  
of Rhonda's Rompers and Co-President of Second Homes Family  
Childcare Association

My name is Rhonda Butler. I am a childcare provider and have been the owner/operator of "Rhonda's Rompers Family Daycare Home" in Branford for the last 33 years. I am writing in favor of S.B. 352, to ask for your vote granting family daycare providers the right to collectively bargain with the state of Connecticut, as has been done in other states. In addition to running my daycare I have been a member of the Second Homes Family Childcare Association for the past 17 years. I currently hold the office of co-president of this organization, a position I have held for 5 years. Our members receive over 15 hours of training a year by childhood educators who present at our monthly meetings. Our members attend training workshops to earn certificates in infant and child CPR, medication administration and first aid for children and infants, including epi-pen administration. None of this training is free. Many of us also pay out of pocket to attend conferences and workshops to further educate ourselves about childcare topics, which enhance our skills.

Parents employ me to care for their children, not only because they appreciate the home setting versus a center-based program, but because of the many positive aspects of family childcare. The children in my care enjoy a nurturing and safe environment which is literature rich and fundamentally enriched with age appropriate curriculums and activities. They receive good nutrition and develop social, language, and academic skills. I have the privilege to include music, yoga and sign language programs by hiring teachers that come to my home to share their gifts. I presently have 9 families, with