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LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE
TESTIMONY TO SUPPORT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
SENATE BILL 352

My name is Kellie Ann Brown. I am a licensed family childcare provider. I have provided care for over 17 years from my home in East Hartford.

I would like for you to support **S.B. 352**, which would allow us to collectively bargain. As a childcare provider, I would like to see a collective voice between providers and the programs that were created to help assist parents as they work or go to school, in this case Care4Kids.

Childcare providers are here to provide a safe, healthy and loving environment that will allow children the freedom to explore, create, and develop as they grow. We are preparing them for school.

Childcare providers would like to come together to improve the way we communicate with Care4Kids. That's why we voted overwhelmingly in support of our union. We would particularly like to address the program enrollment process. It takes about 45 days, or more, to process an application for eligibility for Care4Kids. This long time period and the process it requires, makes it harder for providers to provide for the needs of our children. The reimbursement we receive from Care4Kids is our paycheck. We depend on that money for our daily needs.

Childcare providers need help with health care, higher pay rates and training. We also need direct deposit for faster payments. This will also help us with our banking; we have very long hours and sometimes we can't make it to the bank.

Providers spend a lot of time doing paperwork, calling for information about paperwork, and re-sending paperwork. All of these things hold up payment. Our monthly bills, supplies, food, and gas depend on being paid in a timely fashion. Providers want to work with Care4Kids to improve the paperwork process so that we receive our paychecks on time. Spending less time on the phone means being able to provide a higher quality of attention, education and care for the children we provide for.

Help us make our voice heard by supporting **S.B. 352**.

There is a great need for childcare providers like myself, who provide an important service to children and their parents.

Thank You,

Kellie Ann Brown
East Hartford, CT