

February 25, 2013

Senator Terry Gerratana

Representative Susan Johnson

Public Health Committee

Room 3000, Legislative Office Building

Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on SB 298 AN ACT CONCERNING RENEWAL APPLICATIONS FOR DAY CARE FACILITY LICENSES.

I would love to be present but because of the nature of my business, it is difficult to take time off. My families come first and I pride myself on being open for them.

My name is Malissa Griffith. I am the sole proprietor of Fingerprints Home Daycare in Enfield, CT.

I am grateful that this bill is being proposed before a public hearing. It is a very important cause. I was faced with a situation that seemed to destroy everything that I have worked for in the blink of an eye. Through fault of my own, my 1 piece of renewal paper was received by the DPH four days late. As any full time working parent knows...things can get a bit busy. I was told to shut my doors immediately or there would be drastic consequences. I follow everything by the book. This task of then telling my families that they can't come back tomorrow was gut wrenching to say the least. I work hard to uphold an exceptionally well run, professional, loving and educational environment. My parents were put in a position of sending their children somewhere they weren't comfortable with. They had to take time off of work. I had no income. I had to compromise my reputation. I had to explain to my own children why I was so upset. The children I take care of were confused. None of it made sense. It wasn't at all in the best interest of the children. Who would be responsible if the children from my daycare received sub-standard care while my daycare was closed?

Doing what is in the best interest of the children is what it is supposed to be about.

All I wanted was to work. It seemed a daunting task of having to start an INITIAL application process including paperwork, references, TB tests, fingerprints, and a site visit. Four days prior there wouldn't have been any problem. Waiting for fingerprints alone, is an approximate 6 week to 3 month wait. To wait for a site visit from my field supervisor, who just recently visited with great feedback seemed a bit unnecessary. To add, in this business, when I close my doors, families have to look elsewhere and I lose income and have to start over. I couldn't grasp my head around the situation. I would hope that you

would agree that the current law is not in the best interest of children or home daycares. This exact situation is why so many businesses are given a grace period.

I would love to see that the home daycare facilities have the same opportunity as other businesses do.

Closing my daycare abruptly did more harm than one can imagine. I was in despair. I will forever be haunted by the situation I found myself in. I don't want this to ever happen to anyone else. It is hard to describe through one simple letter the effects the lack of a grace period had on me, my husband, my children, my daycare families and children.

With closing, I hope that you will consider the proposal for SB 298 AN ACT CONCERNING RENEWAL APPLICATIONS FOR DAY CARE FACILITY LICENSES

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully yours,

Malissa Griffith