

**Education Committee
March 6, 2019**

**Senate Bill 931 – Support
Senate Bill 935 – Support
Senate Bill 937 – Support**

Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Jennifer Dow and I have been a child care provider with the Care 4 Kids program for about 15 years. Currently, I am a license-exempt provider but I have been a licensed provider in the past. I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 931, AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENTS TO CHILD CARE PROVIDERS and Senate Bill No. 935, An Act Requiring The Office Of Early Childhood To Develop An Early Childhood Educator Compensation Schedule.

Getting early childhood educators on a regular compensation schedule with higher pay would be a good thing, provided that this legislation is expanded to include family child care providers and not just center-based child care.

In the past few months, I have started missing payments from Care 4 Kids. Before, they were pretty good, but this has been going on for 5th months now. Because I am not getting my regular payments on time, I have no money to pay my bills. In January my phone was shut off, in February my electricity was turned off as well. I am having to borrow money and pay extra just to have my utilities turned back on. This is also ruining my credit which could harm me down the road. My understanding is that all of these issues stem from a software update that occurred at Care 4 Kids. The state did not do a good job on this.

I need to be paid for my work and being forced to wait for months to be paid is unacceptable. The Care 4 Kids program is important for many Connecticut families who depend on it to afford childcare, and for the providers who do the work of getting children ready for school. We need the Care 4 Kids program to work, and we need to do better as a state.

I also encourage you to support, Senate Bill No. 937, An Act Concerning A Student Loan Forgiveness Program For Early Childhood Educators. This is a good bill that will help many child care providers with education loans who are struggling with low pay.

Thank you,

Jennifer Dow