

**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 Marcia Iannacone and I am a family child care provider. 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.

Right now, many family child care providers feel like we are doing everything that is being asked of us while having doors shut on us by the state. The problem is the amount of time it's taking to process paperwork and get payments from the Care 4 Kids program. The level of service we receive from the program is an issue too. I have had more success solving problems by going directly to Beth Bye than I have calling Care 4 Kids.

What's worse is that things seem to be moving in the wrong direction. A few weeks ago, the Care 4 Kids portal included information about application processing status and redetermination processing status. Care 4 Kids has now taken both of those important updates off their website. This is going to make more work for the staff at Care 4 kids as providers call seeking updates.

Something really needs to be done, whether that is hiring additional staff or threatening fines of UnitedWay, the administrator of the Care 4 Kids program for not meeting it's obligations to the state. They are doing a lot to help us, but they need more people to do the work that needs to be done.

I understand that a new computer system is the cause of many problems, but it's way too far into the process for us to continue waiting this long. We are told that work is being done but we aren't seeing it. If it's taking this long, perhaps Care 4 Kids should just go back to the old system?

We want answers and to get paid in a timely fashion. I have done my part, labeling and numbering my parent's pay stubs to ensure the state is receiving accurate information, and I call to confirm that they've received what they need. I can't do any more than what I'm doing right now, I am still having to wait months for payments, and I don't know what I'm going to receive for payment from the Care 4 Kids for the work I have already done.

I cannot take more care 4 kids children without knowing if/when I am going to be paid or when my paperwork would be processed. Where does this leave us and why are child care providers the ones who are suffering in all of this?

Marcia Iannacone