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Testimony of Amy Eppler-Epstein
In support of HB 5121

***AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN PROTECTIONS FOR AND FAMILY CHILD
CARE HOMES.***

Hearing before the Housing Committee
February 18, 2020

I am writing to express my support for HB 5121, An Act Concerning Certain Protections for Group and Family Child Care Homes.

In my work as an attorney at New Haven Legal Assistance, I represented two tenants who were facing eviction by their landlords because they operated state licensed and approved family home day cares. The licensed home day care seemed to me to be a tremendous benefit to the landlord and other tenants in the area, who now had safe, secure, culturally appropriate, and conveniently located day care right nearby, with flexible hours. It benefitted the other tenants in the housing complex, especially since the day care provider offered flexible hours that accommodated the parents' early morning or late evening work shifts. It benefitted the day care provider, who now had stable income. And it benefitted the landlord, since the employment and income of the day care provider and the other working parent tenants made them all able to afford and pay their rent.

Most importantly, it benefitted the children: when licensed home day cares are supported, it ensures that the daycare meets the licensing standards, which provides standards and qualifications for the providers, and the premises. This includes things like limits on the numbers of children per each adult; inspections to ensure the safety of the premises; screening and qualifications of the day care providers; and other health and safety requirements. When licensed home day cares are not permitted by the landlord, day care providers go "underground"—providing "baby sitting" in their own homes with none of the standards or protections that licensed home day cares can provide.

Under current law, municipalities cannot prohibit licensed home day cares from operating in any zones in which single or multi-family homes are permitted. However, current statutes and case law allows landlords to prohibit their tenants from operating a licensed home day care; and to evict them for doing so.

I urge you to pass this law so that landlords will no longer be permitted to prohibit their tenants from operating licensed family day cares in their homes, and will no longer be able to evict tenants for doing so. Please support this law, for the benefit of our day care providers, working parents, and their children.