

**Date: Sunday, February 16, 2025**

**Re: HF 655**

**To: Chairperson West and Committee Members of the Children and Families Finance and Policy**

Thank you for your time. I am asking for your support with bill HF 655 exclude up to two of the caregiver's own children for the purposes of licensed capacity. My name is Samantha Memmen. I have been a childcare provider in Bloomington for 5 years. I started my business in 2020, after I had my second child. Since then, I have welcomed two more children. Now with four children of my own, including the eldest in school, I have very easily met my licensed capacity. Having the ability to not count two of my own children against my capacity count would allow me flexibility to welcome more children into my program should I choose to. It would also allow us more financial support as I work to support my family. Finally, it would allow us to count more children in our food program. As you may be aware, my own children do not count towards any food program reimbursement in my own daycare program.

Please support bill HF 655 as it makes its way through legislature and give daycare providers and their programs more flexibility by disallowing two of our own children.

Thank you for your support,

Samantha Memmen

MN Licensed Daycare Provider: 1101182

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I feel that if your allowing providers not to include 2 of there own children in care than we all should be allowed 2 extra children in care. Some of us providers that have been doing daycare for many years and no longer have our own children in care but have had many years of experience. I have been doing child care for 24 years and I have a 2nd adult and struggle to pay them a decent wage. It would be great to see a capacity allowed that would be 14 under school age 6 under 2 of the 6 4 could be infants and 2 toddlers and the rest can be over 2 and any age you feel comfortable with. Also could lower toddler age to 1 year to 18 months. Not 24 months and definitely not 30 months like the new draft with the new license capacities are stating.

Tonya Ogdahl

# LEAD & CARE

Association of Family Child Care Professionals



## Partnering with Providers, Supporting Family Child Care Businesses

PO Box 1136

Prior Lake, MN 55372

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February 18, 2025

RE: HF0655 Zeleznikar; Family child care capacity limits amended

Mister Chair and Committee Members:

My name is Cyndi Cunningham. I have been a Licensed Family Child Care Provider in St. Paul for 27 years and am the current Public Policy Chairperson for Lead & Care, the 501c3 sitewide association for Licensed Child Care Providers.

I am testifying on behalf of Lead & Care in **support of HF0655**, modifying the ratios to allow the addition of 2 of a provider's own children without impacting the ratios.

Many individuals enter the industry of Licensed Family Child care with their own children in tow. They may be passionate about early childhood ed, have current or past experience in settings, have educational background which fit early care, and possibly can't find affordable and quality care for their own children.

We open businesses with our hearts, homes and share our families with others to ensure loving care for their children to ensure they can work and/or improve their lives with school and other endeavors.

The cost? We receive no financial support for our own children. There are no qualifying tax credits, we cannot claim on the food program, and we are exempt from all other considerations including the Great Start Compensation.

Our children 'take up' slots in our ratios, limiting the potential income ability. These ratios include our children up until the day they turn 11. This limits our income at all age categories until that point in time.

This is true including when a 2<sup>nd</sup> parent/relative take the child to another space of the house.

For 2 children our income potential loss can easily be \$400/week if not more. That is a business loss which we cannot claim, of a minimum of \$1,200/month or \$14,000/year. Minimum. That is a business loss that no other business would accept, yet we are moving forward.

Yes, we are saving money by not expending child care costs. But that cost is not acknowledged in any financial support or tax systems.

Personally, I opened my program with 3 children. It was difficult to ensure that I had enough income to justify calling myself a business. As my children aged up, I still was unable to fill their slots even when

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they were in school and not in the house. I had to run my enrollment to ensure that I had space for them when they were home.

Financial success in a business means optimizing income and limiting expenses. We are diligent in the expense's aspect. We can do nothing at this point in time to optimize income, ratios restrict the potential.

DHS has recently made somewhat changes to how legally our own children are viewed in our care. We have potentially more flexibility in areas such as supervision. This is spelled out in the recently released Modernization public draft #2. It is recognized that our children are in their home and we as parents have the right to balance our care for them with other children in our care.

We love being with our own children, yet the loss of income potential is real and limiting.

Family Child Care is critical to the care of children and support of families in Minnesota. The industry is in a crisis with the loss of programs, over recent years. This loss is felt across the state in particular greater Minnesota. The industry needs unique supports and these are needed now.

Thank you, Rep. Zeleznikar, for bringing this bill forward to work to stabilize the industry by supporting licensed family child care. It's a step in a new direction.

Cyndi Cunningham

Lead & Care Public Policy Chairperson, [Publicpolicy@leadandcaremn.org](mailto:Publicpolicy@leadandcaremn.org)