

April 23, 2025

Dear Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

On behalf of Kids Count on Us, the Minnesota Child Care Association (MCCA), and Think Small, we are writing to thank the House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee for their work, and to encourage support of critical provisions in the omnibus bill by members of the Ways and Means Committee.

First, we are appreciative of the inclusion of nearly \$6 million for the Early Learning Scholarship program. We are very concerned about an upcoming fiscal cliff for the program and the impact the loss of 6,500 Scholarships will have on individual children and their families, as well as on child care providers. We hope that as the budgeting process continues there will be an opportunity to do more in this area.

Next, we appreciate the inclusion of the following licensing provisions, which will provide immediate regulatory relief to licensed family child care programs and licensed child care centers. These measures are essential to addressing the challenges faced by child care providers across Minnesota and ensuring a sustainable system that supports children, families, and providers alike.

- Article 6 Section 3 Reconsideration of correction orders
- Article 6 Section 7 Reconsideration of correction orders, posting licensing actions on department website, and staff distribution
- Article 6 Section 21 Amending definition of education
- Article 6 Section 22 Standardized licensing visit timeline and requirements
- Article 6 Section 23 Standardized county-delegated licensing

The enactment of the above listed provisions would make 2025 a highly successful year in the on-going push to overhaul child care oversight in Minnesota. Yet, we all know, they fall far short of addressing the full scope of challenges and look forward to working over the interim on the comprehensive regulatory and quality assurance reform proposal brought forward by Representatives Coulter and Nadeau.

Finally, we are concerned about the provision in Article 4, Section 2 eliminating an additional 10% payment in the Compensation Support Program for providers serving children using the Child Care Assistance Program or Early Learning Scholarships, or for providers in areas of the state where child care is in short supply. We are concerned that this change works against broadly shared child care access and compensation goals. And while we understand the issues around mandating cameras in some child care facilities raises strong opinions from all sides; we believe more work on the

included language is needed to address the balance of safety and privacy in this complex topic.

We invite you to join us in this critical work as we strive to develop a system that meets the needs of Minnesota's children, families, and providers. Thank you for your attention to these critically important issues. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you throughout this legislative session and beyond.

Sincerely,

Kids Count on Us  
Minnesota Child Care Association  
Think Small