

Good Afternoon Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of HB 2015. My name is Sarah Crozier. I am a Certified Family Child Care Provider in Newburg. I have been in business 7.5 years. My child care program, Mi Escuelita Bilingual Child Care and Preschool, is 5 star rated in the Quality Rating and Improvement System. I am also a member AFSCME Local 132, Child Care Providers Together.

For me the most important piece of Employment Related Day Care is making sure that speakers of other languages have access to high quality care. In our case this happens to be Spanish speaking clients. The proposed changes in HB 2015 will not only help parents, but providers as well. We know that having one year eligibility, the goal of federal recommendations for reimbursements and the incentives for linking QRIS to ERDC will be especially helpful.

One year eligibility provides stability for the child, the parent and the provider. For us as the provider, we will be able to count on having a child care position for the year they are eligible. This continuity builds relationships and help build on their educational experiences. Children can feel secure in knowing that the adults they get to know will be there for them. We know that children in poverty have trouble building long term relationships because they are often shuffled from place to place and caregiver to caregiver. I had a child miss out on the last two months of school because his mom was laid off from her job although she was able to find a job in 3 weeks but by then had to reapply for the program. I couldn't afford to hold the spot open while her paperwork was being processed.

For my program, we haven't raised our rates in 4 years. We know that your parents can't afford it. Quality child care should be accessible to all families regardless of language, ability or soci-economic status. It should not be something reserved for a few lucky children in our society.

I encourage you to pass HB 2015 and continue the conversation to properly fund the child care system.

Thank you for your time.