

Submitter: Tara Dupuis
On Behalf Of: Paid Parent Group
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB91

With the urging of the parents we support, I am writing to you. Please understand how important this is to the parents that they are asking agencies to get involved and show support. I know to some, it would seem that because financially we as an agency have something to gain by supporting the parents that it would make this testimony null and void in some peoples opinions. I hope this isn't the case for the person reading my testimony. I have seen firsthand how life changing it has been, allowing parents to support their under age children in this program. It has blessed their children's lives in numerous ways. I have seen single mothers, who couldn't keep a job because of how unreliable Providers can be, causing them to miss work frequently. Can you imagine the stress in that household? I have seen parents with children who are medically fragile live meagerly, because only one parent was able to work outside the home. When this paid parent program began, these lives change dramatically. You finally gave families an opportunity to thrive because now they could be the caretaker of their children and be compensated for it. Families who lived in apartments were able to finally buy a home for their child, Giving them stability. Families who could not afford a wheelchair accessible vehicle, could now take their child on more outings. Families were able to get off food stamps and public housing. Single mothers, able to finally be able to buy Christmas presents for their children. I've been sent the pictures and it touches my heart. If you haven't seen a picture of how this has changed the lives of the children, you should ask to see some. This paid parent program gives the families quality of life that they didn't have before. Concerning the limit of agencies only being able to support paid parents with a maximum 30% caseload , this is wrong. I am saying this as an agency who is not accepting any more clients, so I have no interest in opening up the door to allow more paid parents into my agency. I am saying this is wrong because parents will inevitably end up on a waitlist, waiting for an agency of their choice to be able to take them on. Not all agencies are the same and parents deserve the right to choose where they want to go if an agency is willing to accept them. We should not be limited because someone feels that we should "earn our money" And not be given an easy ride with too big a caseload of parents being paid. This hurts families, not agencies. There is more than enough need out there for us agencies to build our business as big as we want without the parents being paid in our program. I turn people away daily, who are not paid parents. Please reconsider capping the agencies at 30%. This only hurts the families, not us. Also, please reconsider capping the parents to only being able to work 60 hours per week, per household. Again, you're not hurting me as an agency by capping them. You only hurt them. These are the families that you serve. Please continue to serve them and do what's right for them.

Sincerely,
Tara