

February 24, 2021

Re: HB2166-1

Subject: Comments and recommendations

I agree that there needs to be more support for the children, families, provider as well as parental education. Sometimes a child's behavior is not safe for themselves, their peers or their teachers. Having them remain in care at times creates a hostile and unsafe environment for all. Many times, we are on our own as providers not receiving support from families and left to fix the problem, one that often stems from home life circumstances or developmental delays that are usually undiagnosed and often times when presented to parents they are defensive and unwilling to explore underlying issues.

Currently there are a resource available to help such as WESD. However, in the 20 years I have been a provider I have witnessed many kids fall through the cracks and not receive support and ultimately need to find care elsewhere. Those who do receive support have only received such minimal support it is almost not worth the time and energy involved in coordinating it.

I advocate for more support for mental health and behavior support for the children, families and providers. We have seen an alarming shift of mental health & behavioral health challenges in the past 5 years.

As a privately owned and funded Childcare program we need to operate to serve our families and entire program to best meet the needs of those we serve. As a private business we need to have the freedom to determine who we provide care for.

I strongly recommend that the proposed Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Prevention Program includes childcare provider such as myself, members of the community and a local developmental behavioral specialist on the ELD/OHA planning committee. I am willing to partner to support families and our community but I want to be able to make decisions in the best interest of all that I serve in my program.

Respectfully,

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