

Senator Dembrow, and Chairs of the Committee,

Hi, I am Amber Oldridge; I am a CF home childcare provider from Home Away From Home Family Preschool And Childcare, located in Grants Pass, Oregon. I have been in the field for over 12 years now, and I ran my preschool and childcare from my home for about a year a half now. Not only am I a childcare provider, but I am also a parent. Please support SB236 as it is currently written as a study that allows for data collection of what suspensions and /or expulsion are occurring in the state of Oregon. Let these case study be used as a tool to possibly allow more funding for education, and supportive resources that would be available to childcare providers as well as parents that are struggling with children with challenging behaviors that often tend to lead to suspensions and / or expulsion. However by all means please don't allow any amendments to the bill that would be harmful to family childcare providers, children and families like instituting a ban on suspension and / or expulsions. I feel very strongly that if you were to pass a bill that prevented exclusion and expulsion for childcare providers, you would be causing more harm than good to children, families, and providers. Typically, a good childcare provider does their absolute best for every child they are providing care for. However, there are times when we either find ourselves struggling with a child and /or parent that needs more help than we are either capable of providing or, for whatever reason, it's not a good fit. I personally won't terminate a child for being a child, but I will terminate for constant aggressive behavior toward others. Before I make that rough decision to terminate a child, I write antidotal reports on every incident of that accord. That parent is also given a copy of every report that has been written on their child. We then have a discussion about the incidents and how we can work together in hopes of turning this behavior around. Sadly, but not always, there are parents/care providers who don't take me seriously, because in their mind I am just a **BABYSITTER**, I have no educational background in what I do and/ or they (the parent) are my bosses , and I should be honored to be providing care for their child, so I need to stop complaining and deal with it. Oftentimes, we have parents/ childcare providers that are in denial (the, "not my child," parent). As a childcare provider, not only is it my job to educate children, but it's also my job to protect them. If I have a child in my program, that is frequently harming other children whether it's physically, verbally, or mentally, and after I have used every tool that I have learned from either college classes or work shops that I have taken, why should I be forced to keep that child in my program? Why is it okay for the other children to become and remain a victim? I understand the impact on the child and family that is being terminated, but what about the negative impacts of the children that are being constantly harmed? What about the negative impact on the child care provider that is stressed out, feeling defeated by the system, are being sued by parents, or facing the risk of losing their license, because they're being accused of negligence, because they're not able to protect the children in their program from a child who is constantly harming them, because we are not able to suspensions and /or expulsion . Sadly to even get resources (if they are available), a parent would have to be on the same page and agree that their child is in need of services. If they don't believe that their child requires help, then there's nothing that we can do. On that same note there's not enough resources available, at least where I live. Often times these said resources are full and not available. In fact, I have called about two to three months ago, and left a detailed message to an early childhood resource provider asking her for help, and she has yet to this day has not returned my call. Every time I try calling, it goes to voice mail. In the beginning, I mention that I am not only a childcare provider, but I am also a parent. I mention that for a reason, I am a mother of four beautiful girls. Two of them are considered part of my

program, and they are four and almost two. The last child I ended up terminating used to attack my three year-old(at the time) quite often and aggressively. I can remember the first time I sent the child home for a day. The child came to my program in a bad mood, and any time my child would pick up a toy, he would run up to her and either punch her or take the toy away from her laughing at her when she would cry. There became a time where my daughter hid underneath my kitchen table crying, begging me to help, yelling, "he won't leave me alone, mommy help!" Put yourself in my shoes, and try to think for a moment how you would feel as a parent if you were forced to allow the same child in your home, that consistently harmed your own child in **their own home**. Please tell me, how would you feel? I don't know about you, but I want my child to **feel safe** and **secure in their own home**, wouldn't you? If you pass this law, I wouldn't be able to continue running my program from my home. You would have then taken my children's and my rights away to live in a safe and non-hostile environment. It's one thing if both the parent and I worked together, trying to work as a team on correcting a behavior, but it's another if they're not. That same child I was having issues with for about five months, I had called CPS about two months before I ended care. The mother was encouraged to attend AA classes, because the mother had a drinking problem, and she bragged to me that she told the CPS worker that she wasn't going to, because she doesn't have a problem. However, she admitted drinking a 12 pack of beer to herself every day. Another point that I want to point out, is that certain children's behaviors are often taught behaviors. That being said, by allowing a child that is consently agresive in my program, that agresive behavior can poticaly spread. Where typically I would have hitting rarely happending I would begin to see it more often because in a childs mind this being aggressive will get my needs meet.

This bill, if passed with a ban on explusion and suspension – even a partial one – is bad for children. It's bad for parents. It's bad for early care programs and providers. It doesn't take into consideration how programs will be impacted by insurance rates nor does it consider that the very few companies who do sell daycare liability insurance in Oregon may chose to not underwrite policies in the future. A ban would also increase the risk to programs of being sued by parents when providers cannot keep the other children in the group safe from a violent, physically aggressive child. The system currently makes many of us victims – it's time to fix the system and hold it accountable.

Sincerely

Amber oldridge