

Ashley Woodcock, M.Ed
Founder/Executive Director
Parenting With Intent
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Hello,

My name is Ashley Woodcock and I am the founder and Executive Director for Parenting With Intent. We are a nonprofit organization providing supportive services to youth and families involved in Child Welfare. Our YES! Program (Youth Empowerment Services) has been providing long term mentorship to approximately 200 youth in foster care in the tri-county area since 2018. Our services aim to partner build healthy relationships with these young people in order to minimize the traumatic effects of the foster care system.

I learned yesterday about SB 1521 and was notified that if it passes, our organization will be required to become a CCA because we provide services for youth in foster care who are either placed in temporary lodging or are at risk of placement. **I am writing this testimony because I feel strongly that engaging in this certification would NOT enhance or improve the services received by youth, but it would in fact create additional barriers that would impede our ability to provide the responsive and effective service our youth desperately need and deserve.** While I can understand the need for greater structure and oversight for the programs that are providing placement services for youth in foster care, I can't see the need for this to extend to a program (and others like it) that provide community based mentorship. As you are likely aware, youth in foster care have little agency over their lives and the ways in which they get to interact with people, especially those that provide them services and support. We have built our program to be highly flexible, responsive and guided by the evolving and emerging needs of our youth. Needing to focus our energy and attention on the administration of these regulations would greatly diminish the quality of service we currently provide.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ashley Woodcock