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To: Chairperson and Committee Members
Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Re: Support for HF655 & HF633 – Expanding Child Care Capacity and Supporting Providers

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Joyce A. Berglund, and I have been a licensed family child care provider for over 15 years. I am also a dedicated advocate for early childhood education, a mother, and a foster-to-adopt parent. I am writing to express my strong support for HF655 and HF633, which take essential steps toward strengthening the family child care system in Minnesota.

HF655, authored by Rep. Zeleznikar, proposes a crucial amendment to family child care capacity limits by ensuring that two of a provider's own children do not count in the ratio. As a provider and a parent, I have personally felt the impact of the current policy, which forces providers to choose between caring for their own children and sustaining their child care businesses. My two foster-to-adopt sons have been directly affected by these limitations, making it difficult for me to serve additional families in need of child care. This bill is a step in the right direction to expand child care availability without compromising quality.

Additionally, HF633, authored by Rep. Nadeau seeks to alleviate financial burdens on licensed in-home family child care providers by establishing a property tax credit, reimbursing 50% of the property tax amount. This legislation acknowledges the vital role that family child care providers play in supporting working families and ensures that we can continue to operate sustainably.

Both bills align with the broader goal of increasing access to child care, supporting providers, and prioritizing family rights. By allowing family providers to expand care without penalizing them for having their own children and by offering financial relief, Minnesota will be taking a crucial step toward addressing the child care crisis.

I urge you to support HF655 and HF633, ensuring that family child care remains a viable and thriving option for Minnesota's children and families. Please vote in favor of these bills, and I encourage my own legislators to sign on in support.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Minnesota's children and families. I welcome any further discussion and am happy to share my experiences in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Joyce A. Berglund, M.S.Ed.

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