



Support of H.F. No. 497

Our association is offering our support of HF497 which seeks to prevent child care center employees from receiving CCAP subsidies while they provide care for their own children (found in Minn. Stat. Section 119B.25 Subd.9.)

Investigators have identified that center employees who receive CCAP funding are being paid to provide care for their own children. Employees receive compensation from the center that allows them to meet the CCAP recipient employee requirement. This perpetuates a continuous cycle of reliance on the CCAP program and prevents the parent from seeking an employment experience that will move them into financial independence. Not only does this "incentive" create a need to stay on CCAP, but it takes up space for the 3,000 children and families on the CCAP waiting list who desperately need access to affordable child care.

Our investigative members have also identified nominal levels of care being provided in many of these centers which results in the lack of an effective pre-school education experience that fails to prepare an already high-risk group of children for kindergarten.

Not only is our association focused toward the prevention, detection, prosecution and elimination of fraud in public assistance programs, but we are also committed to maintaining integrity in publicly funded assistance programs. Since the intent of the child care assistance program is to help make quality child care affordable for families so that parents can work or attend school, we must close any gaps in the law which prevent parents from seeking employment that will move them out of poverty and into self-sufficiency and financial independence.

By closing these gaps, we maintain the integrity of the CCAP program by ensuring that children receive early childhood care and education that will prepare them for the future and not put them in a position to receive less than quality child care. This bill provides an opportunity for the 3,000 children and families on the CCAP waiting list to have access to the quality child care that they truly need.

Respectfully,

Crystal S. Herman
MFIA President