

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

One strong united voice for Minnesota workers

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February 27, 2017

Dear Members of the Subcommittee on Childcare Access and Affordability:

AFSCME Council 5 strongly opposes HF 604 which repeals the opportunity for child care providers to exercise their right to vote to form a union.

Prohibiting child care providers from forming a union will not increase access to child care. Likewise, prohibiting child care providers from forming a union will not make child care more affordable for Minnesota families.

This committee has heard a lot of testimony about the flight of family child care providers in Minnesota – providers have been leaving the profession at alarming rates.

Higher wages, good benefits, and a collective voice in bargaining are all things that would help keep providers in the profession. Union jobs would provide higher pay, better benefits and very importantly a stronger voice when negotiating with the employer – the Department of Human Services over licensing, ongoing trainings, reimbursement rates, etc.

Family child care providers work tirelessly to help raise and care for other people's children. They are thoughtful, compassionate and driven – and they deserve better. Taking away their ability to vote to form a union is not the answer.

AFSCME Council 5 strongly opposes this bill and any attempt to limit or remove the ability of workers to have the opportunity and right to collectively bargain.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eliot Seide'.

Eliot Seide
Executive Director
AFSCME Council 5, AFL-CIO

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Julie Bleyhl'.

Julie Bleyhl
Legislative Director
AFSCME Council 5, AFL-CIO