



Minnesota Child Care Provider
Information Network
PO Box 1136
Prior Lake, MN 55372
651-636-1989
www.mccpin.org

The mission of the Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network (MCCPIN) is to support, promote and strengthen the profession of licensed family child care, thereby enriching the lives of providers, children, families, and communities.
March 16, 2021

RE: HF061 Office of Ombudsperson for Child Care providers created, appointments provided, reports required and money appropriated.

Mr. Chair & Committee members.

My name is Cyndi Cunningham. I have been a Licensed Family Child Care Provider in St. Paul for 20 years and am the current Public Policy Chairperson for Minnesota Child Care Provider Information Network (MCCPIN), a 501c3 sitewide association for Licensed Child Care Providers. I served as the MCCPIN representative on the Family Child Care Task Force over the past two years.

I am testifying in support of HF061 for MCCPIN which establishes an office of Ombudsperson for Family Child Care providers. This position was strongly supported within the task force membership under the work of Duty 8.

Family Child Care providers are in a constant position of attempting to navigate the disjointed licensing system with no road map and no centralized support. Providers move forward doing their best and frequently wondering if they are doing the right steps.

When things do not go well, especially in cases of negative actions, correction orders etc. the only individuals to instruct what to do are those on the 'other side' of the accusation. DHS/ county licensors have a vested interest in speaking from a point of view which benefits their decisions. DHS and Licensors are not neutral in their advice and direction.

There is need of one central call line where there is access to all information, documents, and procedures to direct providers. Having a central phone number would streamline and focus questions for providers. Licensing units have a central line to obtain clarification and direction, providers need one also.

As presented in the bill, it is critical in this establishment is the need for the position to be a separate entity from DHS and the licensing unit. There are other systems established which have been successful in assisting with this model. The IRS has an advocate system to give



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This position must be established outside of political arenas and focus strictly on assisting providers with information and support to navigate licensing challenges.

Please support HF061. A bill for an Ombudsperson for Licensed Family Child Care Providers was heard almost exactly 2 years ago. Licensed Family Child Care providers need not wait any longer.

Sincerely,

Cyndi Cunningham
MCCPIN Public Policy Chairperson