March 12, 2018

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee;

I am Jackie Harrington, a 19 year licensed family childcare provider from Rochester MN. I also am an Early Childhood Trainer and during the past 2 years have facilitated the Minnesota Infant and Toddler Credential, a series of 15 courses about foundational knowledge and practices for high quality early learning and care of young children birth to 3.

I am writing to oppose the changes in HF 3403 Subdivision 16 which INCREASES group family childcare capacity to serve up to 17 children with 2 adults. Of the total children ender school age, a combined total of no more than six shall be infants and toddler, no more than four shall be infants.

I cannot stress enough how important it is for our young children to be in programs where they have the time and attention to build relationships with loving, responsive caregivers.

Maybe you have young children, or recall when your child was an infant. Can you imagine what it would be like for your infant or toddler to be in a program with 6 other infants and toddlers AND 11 other children. This kind of program is about maintaining the day, not about building healthy relationships where each individual child can be valued, respected, and supported in their growth and development. Even with 2 adults present this ratio is out of line with creating the high quality, loving programs that our youngest children need for healthy development and success.

Please OPPOSE subdivision 16.

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