



February 23, 2021

Re: Support for HFs 411, 412, and 413

Dear Chair Pinto and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Child Care Association (MCCA), I write in support of all three child care grant bills being heard in committee on February 25, 2021. MCCA is a statewide association of licensed child care providers whose mission is to promote the success of licensed childcare centers as an integral part of Minnesota's early education system. We serve as a voice for professional, high-quality child care that is affordable, accessible, and able to meet the diverse needs of Minnesota families. As MCCA is already supporting HF 413 through the Early Care & Education Crisis Work Group, I will focus this letter on the other two bills being considered.

Our state's new greater Minnesota child care facility grants (HF 411) meet a more discrete need in expanding child care supply but are another part of the puzzle. This bill would provide facility grants directly to providers interested in opening/expanding in greater Minnesota, which would help subsidize facility costs and prevent those from being passed on in the form of parent tuition or suppressed staff wages.

The ongoing child care grants through the Department of Employment & Economic Development (HF 412) are a welcome resource for providers in both metro and greater Minnesota. We especially appreciate that they focus on child care infrastructure broadly, for while facility expenses are a need, it is the ongoing operation of child care that presents the greatest challenge. This bill's flexible funds can be used as providers most need them, whether that is incentives to attract/retain qualified early educators, training and support to become Parent Aware-rated, or technical assistance for the business aspects of child care, to name a few.

All of these bills provide support and important signals for current and potential child care providers: if you want to do this work, if you want to do it well, the state wants to help invest in you and the service you provide.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clare J. Sanford".

Clare Sanford
MCCA Government Relations Chair
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