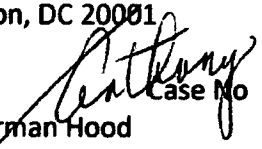


1834 11th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Anthony Hood, Chairman
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th St. NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20001

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 Case No 15-17 (Text Amendment – Child Development Homes)
Dear Chairman Hood

I, Carrie L. Thornhill, am writing on behalf of DC's Early Learning Collaborative Board of Directors. The DC Early Learning Collaborative is an alliance of over 100 education professionals, organizations, and coalitions working together to advocate for improved public policy, public investment, and cross-sector service delivery capacity. The overarching goal is to help produce and sustain a seamless continuum of high-quality programs and services that result in positive outcomes for all of the city's young children and their families.

We support this text amendment for Child Development Homes because of the positive impact they will have on young children and their families in DC. Child Development Homes are an important piece of the early learning network in DC – they offer child care options in residential communities, and their status as the primary residence of the provider facilitates a warm, comforting home-like environment, which promotes a smooth transition for infants entering care for the first time. Each child enrolling in a Child Development Home can be assured a primary provider as well as continuity-of-care, meaning that from the time the child enrolls until they depart from the facility, they will be under the care of the same provider. These components ensure the secure attachment and bonding that is essential to quality infant and toddler care. By expanding the number of children that Child Development Home providers can enroll in their programs, it allows more families to have the option of enrolling their children in Child Development Homes. It will also increase the probability that parents can put their children in the same child care facility.

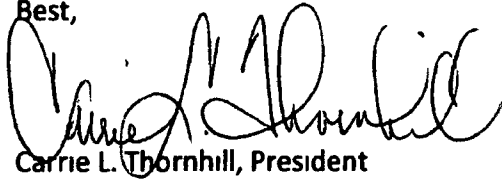
We know there is an urgent need for more licensed Child Development Homes and Centers in order to meet the child care needs of DC families. According to DC Action for Children, "although DC provides universal pre-K to three- and four-year olds, access to early learning opportunities and child care for infants and toddlers remains a substantial obstacle for our city. Currently, there are approximately 26,000 children under age three in the District of Columbia.

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need for zero to three-year-olds! And we know that care and education during a child's early years are crucial, since the first five years of a child's life are more formative than at any other stage, creating either a sturdy or a fragile foundation. Seventy-five percent of brain growth and 85% of intellectual, personality, and social skills develop before age 5. (Wills, 1993 and Purfes, 1988). To make the most of these early years, children need consistent and nurturing care, safe and stimulating environments, nutritious food and attention to their physical needs, and opportunities to engage in positive interactions with adults and other children. Expanding Child Development Home's capacity to care for infants and toddlers will help DC move closer to providing the care needed for our families.

For all of these reasons, I am in strong support of this text amendment. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carrie L. Thornhill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carrie" being more legible than the last name "Thornhill".

Carrie L. Thornhill, President
DC Early Learning Collaborative