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District of Columbia Zoning Commission
Case No 15-17 (Text Amendment – Child Development Homes)
441 4th St NW, Suite 220
Washington, DC 20001

RE Statement of Support

To Whom It May Concern

I, Nyla Beth Gawel, am writing in support of the text amendment to allow Expanded Child Development Homes for up to 12 children. I am a parent living in Ward 4. My child attends Estrellitas ("Estrellitas") Child Development Center and has for two years. Estrellitas includes two locations in which the children migrate from the home facility into the classrooms of a nearby school facility. This structure is perfect for the needs of infants that evolve as the children grow.

With our second child due in December, we are acutely reminded of the need for home daycare facilities to have the ability to accommodate more children than the regulations currently allow. There are three primary reasons why we support this amendment to raise the capacity to 12 children in home facilities:

- (1) There are scarce daycare resources available in DC. We are hopeful that our second child will benefit from Estrellitas like his/her older sibling. However, the infant capacity is at its max – making it unlikely that our second child will be able to attend. This creates a significant hardship for us to have to identify another childcare facility. We are currently on three other waitlists, but have been told that the odds of us receiving a space before I need to return to work post-maternity leave are slim to none.
- (2) Having to have our children attend separate daycares will create an economic hardship. Two separate programs will *double* our current childcare costs. On the other hand, if we could send our children to the same program, we would benefit from the consolidated cost discount that daycares offer for siblings who attend together.
- (3) Concerns over the quality of care (e.g., too many kids in a specific space) or impact on neighborhoods are unfounded. There is little difference in the space of home daycare facilities and those that rent other spaces across all that we have toured. Moreover, the teacher to child ratio is consistent across these facilities. Other issues I've heard raised as concerns such as excessive parking in residential neighborhoods are also unsubstantiated. Parents do not park at daycares all day, so they would not be taking spots away from residents.

This change to increase the number of children in home settings to 12 will truly assist our family and those like us that need to consider logistics, cost, and the quality of care we seek for all our children to have.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for this Text Amendment to Case 15-17.

Nyla Beth Gawel

ZONING COMMISSION
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EXHIBIT NO. 24
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