

Leach, Deonte (DCOZ)

From: Yael Kiken <YKiken@maryscenter.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 9 22 AM
To: DCOZ - ZC Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Statement of Support for Case No 15-17 (Text Amendment -- Child Development Homes)

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

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Statement of Support

I, Yael Kiken, am writing as the Program Coordinator of Mary's Center's Child Care Licensing Program in support of the text amendment to allow Expanded Child Development Homes for up to 12 children. Our program has worked for over 13 years assisting child care providers in starting their own Child Development Homes and Centers. We started this program in 2002 as a culturally-competent approach to expanding quality child care. By providing our clients with step-by-step guidance, we are able to expand the availability of quality child care options that reflect the diversity of our city's population. We currently provide technical assistance to over 50 Child Development Home providers in every ward of the city.

I support this for many reasons:

The necessity for more Child Development Home care in DC: Child Development Homes are an important piece of the child care landscape 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. (At Child Development Centers, children often move between different classrooms, frequently changing teachers and environments.) 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 (instead of having to seek multiple facilities for multiple kids).

Promoting the financial viability of early childhood educators who run their own businesses: Expanding will allow providers (who have the space and staff capacity) to increase their revenue, helping them to be more financially stable, and use their profits to hire additional staff (which will create jobs) and acquire additional training or materials to ensure that they are incorporating best practices in child development.

Increase the possibility for high-quality subsidized child care: Many providers do not participate in the child care subsidy program, or the food program, because the reimbursement rates are low and the paperwork burden is very high (this is compounded by the fact that the provider is often the only staff member, and is responsible for completing this paperwork, along with staying up-to-date with business and licensing paperwork). Many providers have told us that they would like to enter the subsidy program so that they can serve any child who needs care in their community, but that since their programs are so small, it is too great of a pay-cut (since subsidy reimbursement rates for Homes are less than half of the market price). They have said that they would participate in subsidy if their programs could be larger (so that they could have a blend of private and subsidy payments to keep their business afloat).

For all of these reason, I am in strong support of this text amendment. If you have any questions, or if I can assist with this effort, please let me know.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Yael Kiken

Child Care Licensing Program Coordinator

Mary's Center

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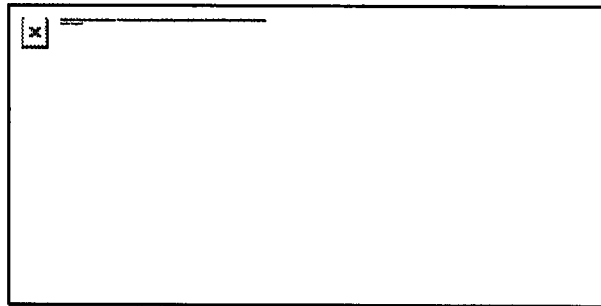
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