

February 7, 2018

Zoning Commission  
441 4th Street, NW  
Suite 200S  
Washington, DC 20001  
Re: Support for Zoning Commission Case No. 17-20

Dear Members of the Commission:

We are writing in support of the proposed text amendment known as Zoning Commission Case No. 17-20. We are parents of two young children in DC and have had firsthand experience with the difficulty of finding convenient, quality, and affordable childcare. My husband and I used to joke that, in this town, in order to get a spot at a daycare when you needed it, you'd have to have the conversation about where the relationship was headed and agree to put your names on a waitlist on the first date.

Also, as parents of one child who "graduated" after three years at Petit Scholars in Brookland and a second one currently there for the next couple of years, we are familiar with the cost and the affect that zoning restrictions have on childcare centers and the working parents that rely on them. These difficulties have a ripple effect on everyone, including the dozens of people employed, in our case, by Petit Scholars.

Over the past four years, my husband and I have gotten to know both the owner of Petit Scholars, La Shada Ham-Campbell, and her staff. We have seen her struggles in trying to open her newest center on Rhode Island Ave (for which she received a grant from the city for just that purpose!). It has taken everything she has, which is a lot. La Shada is as committed as anyone I have ever seen to providing quality, affordable, community-centered childcare. She has worked through this process because she truly believes in bringing positive change to her community. While we all want "the best" from anyone who takes care of our kids, we respectfully ask the Commission to reassess what is truly needed for zoning. Undue regulations can halt the creation of other daycares. And when it comes to trying to retain families in the District, finding affordable, available childcare is one of the biggest challenges.

We urge the Commission to expeditiously approve the proposed corrections and reinstate the permitted use for childcare centers.

Sincerely,

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