

LEAD & CARE

Association of Family Child Care Professionals



Partnering with Providers, Supporting Family Child Care Businesses

Leadandcaremn.org

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March 20, 2025

RE: SF1049 Maye Quade: Funding provision for early learning scholarships

Madam Chair and Committee Members:

My name is Cyndi Cunningham. I have been a Licensed Family Child Care Provider in St. Paul for 27 years and am the current Public Policy Chairperson for Lead & Care, a 501c3 statewide association for Licensed Child Care Providers.

I am testifying on behalf of Lead & Care in **support of SF1049**, which provides funding for Early Learning Scholarships (ELS). This funding will support families in accessing quality programs. If this bill does not pass, funding will revert to previously lower levels and families and providers will suffer as waitlists grow.

The state has invested in the ELS and without funding to actually be utilized by families, these efforts are less effective.

Licensed Family Child Care (FCC) programs have worked to be rated in the Parent Aware program which are the only programs which can accept ELS. A reduction in ELS will not only reduce the option for families but will also reduce the number of clients which FCC programs have available to enroll. This will negatively affect the FCC industry, which is already in a crisis.

This funding is critical to support families and Family Child Care programs to stay current and in business.

Thank you to Senator Quade and others for bringing this bill forward.

Cyndi Cunningham

Lead & Care Public Policy Chairperson

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