

LEAD & CARE

Association of Family Child Care Professionals



Partnering with Providers, Supporting Family Child Care Businesses

Leadandcaremn.org

publicpolicy@leadandcaremn.org

March 27, 2025

RE: S.F. 2705Wiklund Department of Children, Youth, and Families governor's budget bill

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 writing regarding the Great Start Compensation budget/allocations.

This grant has been a significant support for family child care and needs to be fully funded into the future. It not only is financial support, but is also a tangible message from the state that Licensed Family Child care is important and worth supporting.

There are funds being distributed to Certified Centers <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/142C> which could be modified in the fashion that Legally unlicensed (FFN's) are less supported than licensed centers & in-home.

This might be a harsh request; however, it is important to understand the programs which the state is supporting and valuing. Is oversight and quality a priority then this needs to be considered as a change in funding.

Certified centers were created to facilitate their acceptance of CCAP payments. Their standards are not a licensed process, nor can they be compared to anything licensed programs must comply. A 16-year-old can care for more children than in a licensed program, and there are few health and safety or training standards. These programs cannot be rated in the quality program.

Yet, they are supported through the great start comp program as equal to licensed programs. They are not.

Please extend the support for the Great Start Compensation program fully funded to continue the support to programs consistent with the state's goals of quality and safety.

Cyndi Cunningham, Lead & Care Public Policy Chairperson, 651-470-4857

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