



Dear Committee,

I have recently taken over responsibility as the Chief Sponsor of Senate Bill 1829, and would like to take this opportunity in advance of our first call to give my thoughts on the issue of certification for child care teachers. This issue has proven problematic for many local childcare businesses in underserved communities in their effort to provide children with adequate care and services while remaining compliant with state and federal laws.

Several childcare providers from diverse communities have provided me with anecdotal information that reflects that this problem is not only detrimental but pervasive, as both urban and rural lower income communities equally suffer the negative impacts.

The intent of SB1829 is to offer an alternative to the Type 04 certification requirement while not diminishing the educational standards for the Type 04 teacher. It merely serves to create a designation that would allow the child care providers to utilize the education and skill set that they, as practitioners, have identified as being crucial to providing quality early childhood education.

The underlying reason for why SB1829 was drafted was to attempt to address the inequities that arise from the mandatory utilization of Type 04 certified teachers in childcare centers, particularly in hard to place and underserved areas. It is agreed amongst all of the providers and advocates of child care that there currently exists a deficit of Type 04 teachers available to child care centers. This deficit exists as many of these certified teachers understandably choose employment in organizations that offer higher wages and benefits such as public and private educational institutions; whereas community child care centers do not have the resources or capacity to be competitive with such offerings. Additionally, the currently reduced funding and changes to

eligibility requirements for CCAP during the budget impasse, have further diminished the ability of community child care centers to compete. As a result, the employment and retention of Type 04 teachers for funded classrooms in community child care centers has become problematic; thereby creating a very competitive and scarce environment with child care centers generally finding themselves regularly in jeopardy of failing to remain in compliance with the requirements of Preschool for All.

The need to provide alternative routes toward Type 04 certification in hard to place areas is imperative. As well, allowing centers the option of utilizing alternatively certified staff in order to remain in compliance would address the scarcity of educational resources. For instance, Chicago Public Schools allows a BA credentialed teacher to temporarily act in lieu of a Type 04 teacher; as well, Teach For America provisional teachers are allowed in lieu of a Type 04 teacher. This proves that there are alternative solutions to addressing this shortage and concurrently assisting a center in remaining compliant without diminishing the level of professional service delivered to children and families.

It is my hope that all involved parties can create an agreed upon **administrative resolution** that addresses an issue that we all concur exists and as a result, impacts the level of service delivery that many of our community child care centers can offer to families - families who deserve quality care. It is for the foregoing reasons that we must achieve an administrative resolution to the problem or enact SB1829.

I thank you for all of the hard work you all do to ensure that our children receive the best that we have to give them. I know we all agree on that point. I also know that if we all pull in the same direction, we can figure this out. As stated earlier, this issue is not an urban issue alone, it's critical in low to middle income rural regions as well. I'm open to any and all suggestions on how to move forward, including amendments to the drafting of SB1829. I can't do it without you, so I'm thanking you in advance for helping me to address this problem that we all agree exists.

See you on the call!

With many thanks,

Senator Toi W. Hutchinson