

I am writing to express concerns in regard to Bill S.119 that was presented last month. As I understand, if this bill were passed, it would require all early childhood educators to hold some kind of teaching degree. I personally think this would severely cripple the child care system in Vermont.

My specific concerns involve the educators that are part of the Family Child Care Homes program, those that own and operate Vermont registered child care facilities from their homes. My wife and I live in Colchester and send our child to a home daycare and have for just about 4 years and would not want anything more for our daughter. The daycare she attends is registered through the State of Vermont which allows the educator to utilize programs like the food program and allows for us as parents to take advantage of the wonderful child care subsidy program through the State.

To us, it does not matter that our child care provider does not hold a degree in education. We would have difficulty finding anywhere else, especially a larger childcare center, that would provide the early childhood education that our daughter has been receiving the past 4 years. We feel as though all of the other inspections, visits and requirements that are already involved in keeping up with a home daycare would reveal any issues with the progression of young children in a daycare with an educator that does not hold a degree. The opportunity to connect to our educator, because she does not work in a larger center creates a significantly better environment for us as parents and for our child.

As two working parents, this Bill passing and our place of childcare losing their ability to register as a home daycare in the State of Vermont would provide extreme difficulties to us, especially our ability to afford to continue to send our child to daycare at a place that has been our child's constant for the entirety of her life thus far.

We ask you to please consider our concerns while this Bill is on the floor. I wholeheartedly do not think that all early childhood educators in the State of Vermont, especially those who own and operate their own home daycares, should need a teaching degree in order to continue to do so.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tyler Cootware