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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Beth Bye
Commissioner

**Testimony of the Office of Early Childhood
Before the Planning & Development Committee
HB 7276 – An Act Concerning Certain Group Child Care and Family Child Care Homes
Wednesday, March 6, 2019**

The Office of Early Childhood submits testimony concerning Section 2 of HB 7276 – An Act Concerning Certain Group Child Care and Family Child Care Homes.

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood advances a family-centered approach to support young children and their families. Through our core programs, we support infant and toddler care, preschool, after-school care, child care and youth camp licensing, home visiting, and early intervention to address developmental delays. OEC is working toward better coordinated, cost-effective services that supports Connecticut's youngest children and families.

The Office of Early Childhood licenses family child care homes, group child care homes, centers, and youth camps. The OEC notes that a licensed group child care home may operate *outside of a private residence*. It is unclear whether Section 2 of this bill would require these non-residential group child care homes to comply with all local codes and ordinances applicable to single and multifamily dwellings or if this bill would exempt non-residential group child care homes from all local codes and ordinances entirely.

Inspections and approvals conducted by local officials are relied upon to ensure facilities are healthy and safe for all occupants, including children. Such inspections include, but are not limited to, an examination of fire safety, structural integrity, provisions for parking, and environmental conditions. This bill, as written, would appear to exempt all licensed group child care homes from such oversight. The Office of Early Childhood has concerns if this is the intent of this bill. It may simply be an oversight. It is imperative that Connecticut ensures the health and safety of our youngest children.

Thank you for your time and attention. The Office of Early Childhood is committed to work together – with legislators, the executive branch, providers, advocates and parents - to better serve our families with young children.