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# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Connecticut Office of  
Early Childhood

Beth Bye  
*Commissioner*

**Testimony of Beth Bye, Commissioner  
Office of Early Childhood  
Before the Housing Committee  
SB 87 – An Act Concerning Certain Protections for  
Group and Family Child Care Homes  
Thursday, March 4, 2021**

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Good morning Senator Lopes, Representative McGee, Senator Cicarella, Representative Polletta and distinguished members of the Housing Committee. I am Beth Bye, Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). I am here today to testify concerning **S.B. 87 – An Act Concerning Certain Protections for Group and Family Child Care Homes**.

The OEC advances a two-generation family-centered approach in our pursuit of optimal health, safety and learning outcomes for young children. 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. The Office of Early Childhood is working toward better coordinated, cost-effective services that support Connecticut's youngest children and families.

We support the intent of S.B. 87 that addresses licensed family child care homes and group child care homes, which are licensed by the OEC. This bill seeks to remove barriers to operating a family child care home or group child care home. Our agency seeks to support and expand the number of licensed child care programs in our communities, in large part to address the acute shortage of infant and toddler care across the state. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the vital need for child care, in particular family child care homes and group child care homes, as they are smaller programs that often appeal to families. Family child care homes and group child care homes are part of the small business mix in Connecticut, they support our workforce, and we must include them as part of an economic development strategy.

In closing, family child care homes and group child care homes makes up a core component of our child care system. These providers care for our youngest children, providing them with a healthy, safe, nurturing environment during a period of rapid growth and development. Family child homes and group child care homes are an economic driver, both in their role as a small businesses and a workforce support. They have served as dedicated frontline workers throughout the COVID-19 public health emergency. As part of the state's workforce development plan, we must support the growth and fiscal stability of these small business owners. This bill will move us in the right direction.

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Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer your questions now and/or at a later date. The OEC is committed to work together—with legislators, the executive branch, providers, advocates and parents—to better serve our families with young children.