

Written Testimony of Sarah VanCleave
before the Senate Human Services Committee
in support of HB 1347

March 3, 2021

Good morning, Madam and sentsors, my name is Sarah VanCleave. I live in Burleigh county with my husband and two children. I am here in support of House Bill 1347.

My sons name is Mylo and he had an awful experience at an unlicensed daycare. Mylo is sweet and kind and smart and funny. And he's a bit of a momma's boy. He was my first child. I didn't know what was normal when it came to day care. I asked for recommendations on a Facebook group, interviewed each person and toured their facilities. I thought I had done due diligence in vetting a good provider. But my son did not want to be left with her each morning. He threw himself at my husband when he was picked up each day. But the daycare provider reported he was doing well. She would send pictures of him playing and looking happy if we asked for photos.

I never felt good about dropping him off. But things got worse, he started coming home with bruises. Often on his face and forehead. He was a one year old learning to walk so falling down wasn't unusual! I would always ask about the bruising. She would always say it didn't happen there she had no clue.

He was in her care for a year. I left my baby there for a year. One day our daycare provider wouldn't answer our phone calls and knocks on the door for over an hour. When she finally opened the door she said she was changing diapers. She gave my husband our son. Our baby was dirty, crying, his diaper was so soiled that it hung away from his body heavily. He begged for water and ate more than my husband that night at dinner. Obviously, Mylo never went back. He has a wonderful new daycare, he runs into her arms each morning. His bruises on his forehead and cheeks healed up. If he falls and get a bump or bruise there is always an explanation. Mylo is happy, safe and loved. But other kids still are not safe.

In trying to get justice for my baby I reported this provider to child social services. In asking for help from moms on line I found out there were other moms that had the same experience with this provider. In fact, the police were investigating the provider. There were police officers at my daycare during the time Mylo was enrolled in the daycare. I was never informed. And because I wasn't informed I left Mylo there for another six months months. When I had my meeting with social service they acknowledged this provider had several reports against her but nothing was proven so they were not required to inform parents.

Today we are asking you to pass HB-1347 to give parents the safety of knowing the provider is registered and a safe place to leave our children. A fifteen dollar fee, a background check and transparency will likely save a child so much pain and suffering. Please, vote yes on HB-1347.

Sarah VanCleave