

March 7, 2023

SB 2301

To whom it may concern:

My name is Heidi Smith, I'm currently a licensed group childcare provider in Garrison. I have been doing childcare for 12 years.

I am writing in favor of SB 2301.

The previous stabilization grant allowed me to stay open during the pandemic without increasing my rates. It allowed me to implement health and safety equipment, additional toys, and extra learning materials for the children in my care. I was able to use the money to pay for childcare liability insurance, health insurance and overhead increasing costs. With the stabilization funds I was able to keep my weekly rates the same and not have my parents pay extra. I appreciate our state's support with the grants that I received over the last couple years. Since March 2020, it has been difficult mentally/physically trying to keep our children safe and healthy during a pandemic. Having the additional funds has made it easier to work in this field and not have to worry about the financial end. I love my job. Working in early childhood is an amazing career, but it is one of the most difficult and challenging jobs. Our career choice was overlooked for years, but we are essential to keep the workforce continuing in North Dakota. With inflation constantly playing a role, these funds help keep our costs down and not have to make families pay additional tuition if the stabilization monthly grant continued ASAP.

Sincerely,

Heidi Smith

Heidi Smith's Daycare