



Amber Osowski, Owner

Rocking Horse Child Care

Rep. Vigesaa and members of the House Appropriations Committee:

My name is Amber Osowski, owner of Rocking Horse Child Care, a Quality Rated Step 2 Program in Grafton. As a childcare provider, I strongly support HB 1012, specifically the Economic Assistance Section as programs under the Childcare Assistance Program have had a direct positive impact to move the needle on the childcare crisis in our state. The programs that have been developed since the appropriations of the last legislative session have become a vital piece being able to operate a childcare in what is now an extremely difficult time.

Currently, Rocking Horse Child Care participates in nearly every program offered to providers in our state. The single most impactful is the Childcare Workforce Benefit Program. Since the introduction of the Workforce Benefit Program, I have been able to hire and enroll 4 new staff and their children growing my workforce by over 30%. The additional income provided by the Workforce Benefit Program also allowed me to raise the pay of each staff of Rocking Horse Child Care. Couple this program with the Criminal Background check process being streamlined and I was able to interview and receive a completed background check for a new hire in 5 days. She accepted the teaching position on the spot after I confirmed she would qualify for free childcare under the Workforce Benefit Program. Just 8 days after her interview she began her first day at Rocking Horse Child Care. This is drastically different than the timeline from a year ago.

The support and funding provided by USpire, Child Care Aware, Bright & Early and other programs under the Department of Health and Human Services has allowed my program to expand. By the end of February, we will be moving into the newly constructed Walsh County Childcare Facility as its first tenant. Without these imperative programs the future of Rocking Horse Child Care and the health, wellbeing, and education of the children who attend are at risk.

I implore you to approve HB1012 with the originally proposed amount of 7 million Dollars. The children of North Dakota are worth the investment.

Thank you for your time and commitment to the children and Families of North Dakota.

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