

Committee on Human Services Reform Finance and Policy
Wednesday, February 1, 2017
3:00 PM, Minnesota Senate Building, Room 1200

Chair Senator Abeler, Members of the Committee:

My name is Paula Landis, and I am the Director of Curriculum at the YWCA Minneapolis. I have been in the field of Early Childhood Education since I was an adolescent. I have a BA in Education with a focus on Sociology and Psychology, I have a Masters in Education, and am a Doctoral Candidate for Educational Leadership. I have three children, 14, 12, and 8 years old. I am a single, full-time parent.

Affordable child care is one of the many barriers families face when it comes to a parent's ability to work. I ask this Committee to make child care more affordable by supporting and building on Governor Dayton's budget proposal.

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) made it possible for me to work and go to school. As a parent, CCAP made it possible for my children to have consistent, high-quality care while I worked and went to school. As a teacher of teachers, I see a parent's ability to work or attend classes directly tied to whether her child has an early childhood program.

The wait time for me was 18 months. Waiting for the ability to work was very difficult, as was the eligibility redetermination process. It felt like I was constantly refilling and/or losing my CCAP. The rates would fluctuate dramatically from under \$100 to over \$200 a month.

Overall, CCAP helped my family get off of assistance because I was able to be at work consistently. I have since been promoted twice within my organization and I believe a large part of the credit goes to CCAP.

I am excited that Governor Dayton's proposal includes important CCAP updates that bring Minnesota into compliance with federal guidelines and better support families. Twelve-month eligibility redetermination, continued eligibility during the 12-month eligibility period, and no increases in copayments during the 12-month eligibility period will all help to eliminate the cliff effect and provide families the stability they need to thrive.

I would also encourage the Committee to build on Governor Dayton's proposal by increasing funding for Basic Sliding Fee CCAP. There are currently over 5,000 families on the wait list, and without additional funding, the number of families served will continue to decrease.

More families need help; there are so many waiting to have a stable child care situation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Paula Landis
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