

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Leah Hanlon and I have owned a large family child care since 2010 and I have owned a small center (capacity of 48) for three years. I wanted to contact you in regards to the group size ratios. I have been open at my center since July 1<sup>st</sup> without any need to shut down due to COVID related reasons. My in home child care has been open since June for the same reasons and we have had no shut downs due to a positive case of COVID-19.

Due to the mandated closure and multiple families disenrolling, we are at half capacity at our center even though we've been open for months. It is hard to manage a business at half capacity. We lose valuable staff if we can't retain them and our fixed costs stay the same with 24 children or 48, which makes it very hard to afford to stay in business. We recently just had a few children sign up and reached 26 children.

The in home child care just had two new children sign up. One is a sibling of an older child currently attending the program. With the 12 person capacity, ten of those children are siblings. We have seven families, seven exposures, and yet if this gets passed, we won't be able to continue to operate at this level. We would need to disenroll four children, causing a huge disruption to families that have been with us for years and want to have their child in our care. Also, these families choose us as it feels safer to them to be in an in home child care where less people come in and out of the building and there is less exposure. I ask that you please keep the capacity at 12 for the large family child cares. Families should be able to decide the level of exposure they feel comfortable with. Why is it safe to allow 10-15 preschool age children in a classroom together but not allow 12 children in an entire house to be together? It's hard to understand the reasoning.

However, if the capacity has to be limited, I ask that you please consider it to be by family. So if there is a set of siblings, that doesn't count two times towards the capacity. It should be number of additional exposures vs number of children.

Thank you,

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