

From: Pellatt, Nan [<mailto:Nan.Pellatt@leg.bc.ca>]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2018 8:53 AM
To: Brown, Edena MCF:EX
Subject: Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative

Good Morning Edena:

MLA Thomson has a constituent who is a licensed preschool for children aged 3 to kindergarten but runs only a morning program. She does not understand why her preschool does not qualify for the new child care fee reduction initiative. I will copy the response that she received and ask if you can find out any more information as to why her operation is not eligible. She feels this is discrimination and that she can not be competitive with other day cares.

Here is the ministry response:

> At this time, the focus of the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative is to assist parents by reducing fees in the most expensive child care types. As licensed "under 36 months" and "3 years to Kindergarten" care are the two child care types with the highest median fees in the province, the Ministry is currently restricting eligibility to these care types.

>

> Thank you.

>

> Child Care Operating Funding Program

> Ministry of Children and Family Development

> Office 1.888.338.6622 Option 2 | Fax 250.953.3327

>

Here is her response:

Thank you for the reply. It is very confusing as you have basically described what we do which is childcare for children aged 3 years to kindergarten so I do not understand what you are saying?

You have stated the Ministry is currently restricting eligibility to "these care types, aged "3 years to kindergarten" and that is exactly what we do so why are we being discriminated against?

If you cannot answer my question, perhaps you could give me the name of someone who can as I need to know.

This decision makes us no competitive anymore and I do not understand why?

Any clarification that you can unearth would be much appreciated. Thanks Nan

Nan Pellatt
Constituency Assistant to



Steve Thomson, MLA
Kelowna Mission
102 2121 Ethel Street
Kelowna, British Columbia V1Y 2Z6
Office: (250) 712-3620
E-mail: Steve.Thomson.MLA@leg.bc.ca

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From: Popham.MLA, Lana [mailto:Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca]
Sent: Monday, May 7, 2018 3:46 PM
To: Brown, Edena MCF:EX
Subject: Letter from one of Minister Popham's constituents

Hi Edena,

My apologies if I'm sending this to the wrong person – s.22 wasn't quite sure if I should be sending this to Minister Conroy or Minister Chen instead. Our constituent has contacted our office with some pretty specific questions about her daycare operation and the new government legislation – I was wondering if you or one of your colleagues might be able to advise on some messaging or information I could pass back to address her concerns. I have included the letter she sent to us as a word document.

Thanks for your time!
Chris

Chris Wieczorek

Constituency Assistant to Hon. Lana Popham
Member of the B.C. Legislature for Saanich South and Minister of Agriculture for the B.C. Government
P: 250.479.4154 | F: 250.479.4176 | 260-4243 Glanford Avenue, Victoria BC V8Z 4B9

From: s.22
Sent: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 8:52 AM
To: Popham.MLA, Lana
Subject: Child care funding letter

Hello Lana,

Please see attached a letter regarding the new child care initiative. Thank you,

s.22

Your Name
s.22

April 22, 2018

Recipient Name
MLA South Saanich
Room 325 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Recipient Name,

I am the owner and operator of Dragonfly Lane Family Daycare in Saanich, s.22
s.22 I opened my daycare two years ago because I love working with children and
wanted an opportunity to have s.22

s.22

The child care initiative that has been brought in by our NDP has put child care operators like myself in a very difficult position. I want my clients to be able to have a fee reduction on their child care costs, but adding more work to my day is not helpful. I currently work a nine hour day without any real breaks. Those nine hours per day do not include the time spent outside of typical daycare hours to do planning, paper work, shopping for supplies, and communicating with parents. Now, if I opt in, add to this another administrative task for the fee reduction (completing paper work and liaising with the government on a regular basis). The 10 percent increase in CCOF is not an incentive for me as I would only receive approximately twenty dollars extra per month. I do not receive the CCOF for s.22

s.22

Why is the onus on the child care provider to do extra administrative work so the families can save money – especially with little to no incentive for us? Why doesn't the government just send the reduction directly to families who register and report child care expenses during income tax season? You may argue it is for the government to insure that child care costs don't increase in an unfair way for families, yet this practice only occurs in a small number of places. Most providers are fair and want to earn an honest income.

Another setback to the program is that government would heavily control pricing. With so many other expenses increasing, especially government run entities such as BC Hydro, it is a little hypocritical to deny any modest increases in costs to families. When you actually look closely at the number of hours s
s.22

s.22 . It is difficult for owners to give up control of their own income, earned from their own business.

As a small business owner I have worked hard and spent a lot of money to open my centre. I do not wish to sign a contract with the government stating how many paid holidays I can take. As well, there is no funding for any sick days a provider may need, even though it could be dangerous to children when their

provider is ill. Child care providers deserve these days as much as any other working person. I truly hope the government can reevaluate this plan with the child care providers in mind, as well as the families. After all, child care is already hard to families to find, so adding the governmental regulation and extra work that comes with it is not encouraging for any potential child care owners who would create new spaces for the children of British Columbia.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Sincerely,

Your Name

From: s.22

Sent: Saturday, March 31, 2018 2:49 PM

Subject:

To whom it concerns

I am writing to you because I thought you may be interested in noting the differences in fees available to my centre. It is my understanding that Licensed Family Daycares in BC provide more daycare spaces than any other group, and yet we feel as though we are being driven out of the industry by this initiative.

The parents in my Licensed Family Daycare will receive far less of a reduction simply because they've chosen a small environment over a group centre. Why wouldn't the government support choice, and small businesses like my own. I have 25 years of proven success in my field, and I am so disappointed that the government does not recognize that.

For full-time enrolment, you must reduce parent fees by:

- *Infant/toddler care (under 36 months) -*

Group \$350/month

Family \$200/month

- *3 years to Kindergarten*

Group \$100/month

Family \$60/month

The NDP have implemented the Universal Child Care plan, but if you look at the numbers I have provided, you can see it is far from universal.

As a small business owner, I had hoped the fees would be the same for all centres and all families would receive the same advantages, however, that is not the case.

I urge you to bring these figures forward to the next session of parliament. I believe the NDP need to be held accountable for bringing forth an unbalanced scale for families and childcare providers.

Thank you for taking the time to review my letter. This plan will drive families out of small centres and into big box care because they will receive more money.

Kind Regards,
s.22

From: s.22
Sent: Wednesday, March 21, 2018 11:21 AM
To: Conroy.MLA, Katrine <Katrine.Conroy.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: Opt-in program

Hello. I am wondering about the CCOF funding program and opting in. Providers are concerned that they are not going to be approved if they are planning on raising their fees. Can you please tell me what the government is deeming to be an acceptable fee raise? Some information would be wonderful.

s.22

From: "Marks, Beverly LASS:EX" <Beverly.Marks@leg.bc.ca>
Date: March 1, 2018 at 10:00:13 AM PST
To: "Conroy, Katrine MCF:EX" <Katrine.Conroy@gov.bc.ca>, "Chen, Katrina MCF:EX" <Katrina.Chen@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "smallexplorersfamilydaycare@hotmail.ca" <smallexplorersfamilydaycare@hotmail.ca>
Subject: Childcare

Good Morning Minister, Please find attached letter from MLA Barnett and Constituent Jamie Hughes regarding Childcare changes.

Beverly Marks, CA
Donna Barnett, MLA
Cariboo Chilcotin
250-395-3916
Beverly.marks@leg.bc.ca



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March 1, 2018

Honorable Katrine Conroy

Minister Children and Family Development

Victoria, BC

Dear Minister Conroy,

Please find attached correspondence received from my constituent Jamie Hughes owner /operator Small Explorers Daycare. She has written us with her concerns regarding the recent announcements regarding childcare in our Province.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours Truly,

MLA Donna Barnett, Cariboo Chilcotin

CC Parliamentary Secretary for Child Care, Katrina Chen

MLA Laurie Throness, Opposition Critic

Jamie Hughes, Small Explorers Daycare

BC Liberal Official Opposition
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

March 7th, 2018

Honourable Minister Katrine Conroy
P.O. Box 9057 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2



Re: At risk of losing established child care society after 20 years.

My name is Christine McGuinness and I am the founder and society coordinator of Steps to the Future Child Care Society which is the only not for profit charitable school age care in Sooke. In December 2016 our society managed to procure a mortgage to purchase 2.5 acres of land with 2 very large, wonderful homes the we operate out of. We are licensed for 30 children in each facility with 90 children registered, a waitlist of 25 school age children and 15 children waiting for our 3 - 5 year old program to open.

In February 2017 (after we had all approvals done for our Vancouver Island Health Authority license and ready to open our 2nd facility), the District of Sooke staff put a hold on our license to operate because we do not have a business license, citing "life & safety" concerns after the building inspector only spending 10 minutes in the building. We had 4 visits from the D.O.S. fire department with written approval to operate dated Jan. 30th, 2017 and a stamp sealed "Municipal Zoning Approval" signed November 29th, 2016. This approval also states "Important- Sign off of this form indicates the Municipality has approved the above location for the specified use. It is the responsibility of the Municipality to ensure all required departments are consulted". In the D.O.S. Business License Bylaw #301 it states that as a charitable society we are exempt from needing a business license.

V.I.H.A. held up our license and we had to hire an architect to prove that the buildings were structurally sound. This report was sent to the D.O.S. staff and then we were told that we needed to get an engineers report as well.

In the meantime, our society had to pay both mortgage & rent to the School District #62 who gave us final notice to remove our programs from all the schools we operated out of. We had been asked to leave for the past 10 years but, could not find appropriate accommodations to suit our size of operations.

The "Professionals" reports & inspections cost us \$7,000.00. We were close to ruin before we even got started. What we are questioning now is that both Mr. Howat (the staff calling our licensing) and Mr. Bastone the building inspector

From: Farnworth.MLA, Mike [<mailto:Mike.Farnworth.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]

Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2018 11:56 AM

To: Brown, Edena MCF:EX

Subject: FW: NDP Daycare fee reduction initiative

Hi Edena,
Hope all is well. s.22

This is what I think Ruth intended to send you. As her concerns are of a general operational nature could you let us know what the response is?

Thanks,
Bye for now,
Gord

Gordon Wickerson,

Constituency Assistant to Hon. Mike Farnworth, MLA Port Coquitlam
107A-2748 Lougheed Highway,
Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 6P2
T. 604-927-2088; F. 604-927-2090



From: carol wiens s.22

Sent: Tuesday, March 27, 2018 5:41 PM

To: Farnworth.MLA, Mike <Mike.Farnworth.MLA@leg.bc.ca>

Subject: NDP Daycare fee reduction initiative

Attached please find my thoughts on this recent initiative. I operate a large daycare in Port Coquitlam.

I have also sent a copy of this letter to the opposition.

Regards,

Carol

BrightStart Children's Academy Ltd.

Early Learning & Child Care Infant – 12 yrs

Head Office: 1450 Johnson St. Coquitlam BC V3B 8A2 778-285-8528 1141 Riverwood Gate,
Port Coq. BC V3B 8A2 778-285-8535 2830 Bainbridge Ave, Burnaby BC V5A 3W7 604-563-2855
101-17610 – 65A Ave, Surrey BC V3S 5N4 604- 420-0422

March 28, 2018

Mike Farnsworth, MLA

My name is Carol Wiens and, along with my business partner, Evelyn, are independent business owner/operator of three Licensed Childcare Facilities in the Lower Mainland called, BrightStart Children's Academy. In total we have 227 licensed spaces and we are scheduled to open a fourth facility with 110 spaces.s.22

s.22

s.22

Over the 9 years of operation, we have experienced firsthand, that it is one's teachers and staff that makes your service meaningful for families. New facilities and fancy webcams are welcomed extras, but at the end of the day, it is the relationship of the family to their beloved teacher. Knowing that staff are our most important resource, we developed a 3 year plan (Starting January 2017) to slowly and methodically bring up the average wage of all our teachers to a "living wage" standard. We had fee increases Jan 2017 and Jan 2018; both were announced two months ahead of time and, most importantly, both indicated to our parents that 100% of the fee increase was going back to the teachers (in the form of wages or benefits). Parents were on-board with us, especially when our staff confirmed with them, that, yes they did get a raise and yes, our benefits were increased.

Related to wages somewhat is the additional problem that the supply of qualified ECE teachers is in decline. In the childcare field, the biggest challenge facing both families and operators is a high staff turnover rate, as staff are jumping from facility to facility for higher pay. We have done our best to combat this challenge by increasing wages as much as possible and providing an inviting work environment complete with professional development opportunities, social events and unlimited vacation time.

So, while staffing and wages are my burden, I can appreciate that families are feeling the financial burden of childcare. Some type of financial relief is appropriate; however the tax dollars will only go so far and not every tax payer would agree that subsidized childcare is an enshrined right for everyone.

When I first heard of the idea of universally affordable Childcare plan, I was hopeful that the government would be wise in how the money is spent, with consideration given to both families and operators. What I am seeing now is a poorly thought out plan that ignores the plight of the employees, the lack of qualified staff, poorly planned handouts to parents, and a complete dismissal

of personal business owners. I feel marginalized and disposable.

BrightStart
Children's Academy Ltd. Early Learning & Child
Care Infant – 12 yrs

Head Office: 1450 Johnson St. Coquitlam BC V3B 8A2 778-285-8528 1141 Riverwood Gate, Port
Coq. BC V3B 8A2 778-285-8535 2830 Bainbridge Ave, Burnaby BC V5A 3W7 604-563-2855 101-
17610 – 65A Ave, Surrey BC V3S 5N4 604- 420-0422

At this point, s.22

s.22

so that we can supply more licensed spaces to the community. 's.22

s.22

I am seriously concerned over the idea that if we choose to “opt-in” to this program I would be handing over the control of the one and only revenue source we have. There is a stigma today that small business owners including daycare owners are greedy; that the owners are sitting on piles of money, without any regard for our families and staff. It appears that the government has “bought” into this myth by suddenly requiring approval of our fees. The government has not been transparent as to what criteria they will use to approve/disapprove of a proposed fee increase and this has the potential to hinder our long term goal to bring our teachers average wage up to a "living wage". I am concerned the government will reject my plan to bring my staff's wages up. The government has not even provided a workable solution for the 2% payroll hike.

Nobody wants to raise fees, however I can not continue to absorb the ever increasing expenses; staffing, sky-rocketing leases and new taxes are the primary offenders.

The information from the government has been hastily put together and contradictory at times. Most importantly there seems to be a long-term agenda that I am not privy too, yet I have the distinct feeling that the agenda DOES NOT include independent owner/operators like myself. Business owners have been left to their own assumptions and with the few facts we have, it shows the government aggressively looking to perform a hostile takeover of our businesses.

I am not sure why the government has chosen to alienate this sector of childcare providers; we are the majority and BC parents will suffer if we all end up closing shop because the government is meddling too much.

I would ask that the NDP stop alienating small business; we are the backbone of the economy. Today I have decided to opt-out until I am satisfied that the government will not be taking away my business.

Sincerely,

Carol Wiens

Director/Owner

BrightStart Children's Academy