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March 14, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 388 – *An Act to Provide Access to Quality Family Child Care for Military Personnel by Exempting Certain Military Child Care Providers from State Licensing Requirements*

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide information neither for nor against LD 388, *An Act to Provide Access to Quality Family Child Care for Military Personnel by Exempting Certain Military Child Care Providers from State Licensing Requirements*.

LD 388 would exempt child care providers licensed or certified by the Department of Defense (DoD) or the United States Coast Guard (USCG) from Maine's child care licensing requirements. After meeting with DoD representatives regarding their licensing, OCFS believes that the licensing requirements implemented by DoD and USCG are sufficient to ensure the safety and well-being of children in these child care settings, but OCFS would like to offer some information for the Committee's consideration.

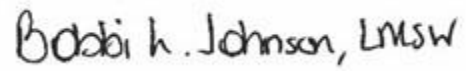
While DoD and USCG licensing regulations are sufficient to ensure the safety and well-being of children in the care of these providers, being licensed by the State of Maine opens up opportunities for funding that may benefit providers. For example, only licensed providers qualify for the salary supplement program which provides financial support for child care staff. Maine's licensing rules also incorporate requirements of the Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) which funds the Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP), ensuring provider accessibility for families that rely on CCAP to afford child care.

OCFS understands from speaking with DoD representatives we understand an amendment may be proposed to LD 388 to clarify that the intent is to allow DoD or USCG licensed providers located in Maine to care only for children of service members without requiring that they be licensed by the State of Maine. Prior to seeing specific language, we can share that we would likely be in support of LD 388 were the bill to be clarified in this manner as it narrows the scope of the families who might be served by these providers and eliminates concerns about CCAP eligibility since service members are separately eligible for child care subsidy through DoD/USCG.

OCFS appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with this information.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW
Director
Office of Child and Family Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services