

Laurie Brown
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My name is Laurie Brown.

I am speaking neither for nor against the bills referencing Child Development Services. I have known CDS workers and the work they do for over 10 years. Those workers I have been in contact with are well educated, hard working and dedicated to the families they help. CDS providers generally have advanced degrees and certifications that are specific to the work they do. There is ONE certification for CDS teachers, that falls within the 282 Teachers of Children with Disabilities. K-12 special education certifications do not otherwise cover the children from birth to age 5.

You have heard repeatedly that CDS has been historically underfunded. During this historic drought, the employees continued to work, in part because the advocacy the employ is (to them) the most important part of their work. Responsibility for proper funding does not lie with the worker, it lies with upper management, and their relationship with the legislature.

While you are deciding the fate of CDS I aske that you remember the workers. They showed up every day, during a pandemic, simultaneously adjusting their personal and professional lives. They dropped off materials outside of the homes of clients in order to make sure the children had access to needed supports as we realigned how we did business. They relearned their jobs, over and over. Some of them watched their own family members get sick (some became ill themselves), watched some family members die, and continued to work.

Adapted. They have adapted. CDS employees have a tremendous ability to adapt to change and to adversity. If you want to know what is in the best interest for CDS, ask the employees.