



Office of the Regional Chair | Jim Bradley

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January 18, 2019

Hon. Lisa Thompson
Minister of Education
Mowat Block 22nd Floor,
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Thompson,

I am writing to advise you that on January 17, 2019, Niagara Regional Council received Report COM 03 – 2019 BILL 66: RESTORING ONTARIO'S COMPETITIVENESS ACT: Legislative Amendments related to Home Child Care Programs and approved the following recommendation: ***That the Regional Chair, BE DIRECTED to write a letter to the Ministry of Education containing the recommended changes to Bill 66 as they related to Home Child Care and to include this report for their consideration.***

As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager of licensed childcare and EarlyON programs in Niagara, Niagara Region commends the Province of Ontario's commitment to increasing affordable and accessible childcare options for families. The proposed changes to the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* are intended to provide families with more choices about childcare options.

We would like to bring to your attention our concerns related to some of the proposed changes outlined in Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act, 2018.

Niagara Region is responding to specific proposed amendments to Subsection 6 (3) of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) through Bill 66, as children's safety is our utmost priority.

1. "Sub-subparagraph 1 iv A provides that the group of children in the care of one home child care provider may not include more than two children who are younger than two years old. Proposed amendment: to increase the number to three children who are younger than two years old.
2. Sub-subparagraph 1 iv B provides that the group of children in the care of two home child care providers may not include more than four children who are younger than two years old. Proposed amendment: to increase the number of children to six children who are younger than two years old.
3. Sub-subparagraph 2 iii provides that the group of children in the care of an unlicensed child care provider may not include more than two children who are younger than two years old. Proposed amendment: to increase the number to three children who are younger than two years old."

Further to a motion by Niagara Regional Council on Thursday, January 17, 2019, please find the attached report addressing concerns that have been shared locally and across the province.

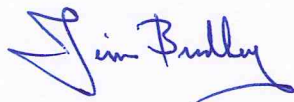
We would like to emphasize our recommendations which are as follows:

That the Ministry:

- Review the Ombudsman report *Careless about Child Care, October 2014* and recommendations outlined in the report be implemented to reduce risks for children in informal care homes;
- Strike the proposed changes, to the number of children, by age, allowed to be in care in an informal care setting, instead remaining with the current allowable maximums; and
- Further to the Ministry's commitment to develop a new early years and childcare plan in 2019, consider working with local service managers for any future legislative changes within the context of this new plan that would seek to increase access to childcare, improve service, reduce administration and ensure a fiscally responsible system.

We look forward to continued collaborations with the province and providing input into any changes to the early years and childcare system moving forward. We support you in your goal to increase access to affordable, accessible childcare through an effective and efficient system.

Yours truly,



Jim Bradley, Chair
Niagara Region

cc: Hon. Todd Smith, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

JB:bn

Enclosure