



February 10, 2026

**Subject:** SEIU 1199NE testimony in support of H-7371 (Zoning Ordinances – Family Child Care)

Dear Chairman Casey and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Municipal Government and Housing:

I am writing on behalf of SEIU 1199NE, a labor union representing approximately 7,500 healthcare, home care, and child care workers across Rhode Island, to express our support for H-7371.

H-7371 addresses an important barrier facing licensed family child care providers by ensuring that local zoning ordinances cannot restrict providers from serving the number of children already permitted under state licensing standards. Currently, some municipalities impose local limits that prevent providers from operating at the capacity approved by the Department of Human Services, even when those providers meet all state health and safety requirements.

Family child care providers are a critical part of Rhode Island's child care system. They offer small, home-based settings, flexible schedules, and culturally responsive care that many working families rely on. At the same time, Rhode Island continues to face a significant shortage of child care. Local zoning restrictions that reduce provider capacity unnecessarily limit access to care for families and undermine the financial stability of small, home-based child care businesses.

By establishing a consistent statewide standard aligned with Department of Human Services licensing requirements, H-7371 will help expand available child care slots, support the sustainability of family child care providers, and improve access to reliable care for working parents. Increasing child care availability is also essential to supporting workforce participation across Rhode Island, including for healthcare and other essential workers represented by SEIU 1199NE.

Importantly, this legislation does not weaken health or safety protections. Family child care providers will remain fully subject to all Department of Human Services licensing standards and oversight. The bill simply ensures that local zoning rules do not conflict with or undermine state-approved capacity levels.

For these reasons, SEIU 1199NE respectfully urges the Committee to support H-7371.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued work on issues affecting Rhode Island's working families.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alex Moore".

Alex Moore  
Political Director  
SEIU 1199NE  
[amoore@seiu1199ne.org](mailto:amoore@seiu1199ne.org)  
678-910-3378