

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
BEFORE THE SENATE STATE, VETERANS & MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON HB 21-1222: REGULATION OF FAMILY CHILD CARE
HOMES
April 27, 2021
Lindsey Vigoda, Colorado Director
Small Business Majority**

Thank you Chairwoman Gonzales, Vice Chair Coleman, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lindsey Vigoda and I'm the Colorado Director for Small Business Majority, a small business organization with offices nationwide, including here in Colorado. Our mission is to empower America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. I am here to express our support for HB 21-1222, which would classify child care homes as residences for purposes of licensure and local regulations.

Colorado has been experiencing a shortage in licensed family child care homes over the last decade, as local regulations and municipalities categorize the use of a child care provider's home as a commercial "use," resulting in increased standards and requirements that limit the viability and operations of family child care homes. This creates a barrier for child care providers as the licensing requirements can limit the number of children that attend these programs, increases costs for small businesses to ensure they meet commercial fire and zoning requirements, and prevents small businesses from opening new programs.

Family child care homes are a vital component to the economy in our state and working families with young children need quality child care that is accessible and safe for their children. But over the last year, the Colorado workforce has struggled to find quality care for their children as the COVID-19 pandemic has forced Coloradans to stay home and be vigilant about their health, affecting their means to work and live a dignified life. And for those who are essential employees and work in the front lines, the lack of nearby care is forcing them to decide between their livelihood and the health of their children.

Easing the burden on licensing and local regulations will increase the supply of licensed family child care homes in our communities, and help close the gap in quality and affordability in family child care homes. These facilities provide in-home learning environments in smaller group sizes and offer great flexibility for hard-working Coloradans need who have non-traditional work schedules.

This is why we support House Bill 21-1222, legislation that will remove unnecessary regulations for small business owners within the child care industry, and would require local regulatory entities to treat family child care homes as residences. Even while easing their ability to get licensed, family child care homes will still need to abide by high safety standards for regulatory purposes such as zoning, fire, life safety, and building codes.

Our state's economic recovery depends on getting Coloradans back to work, and they can only rejoin the workforce if they're able to access safe and affordable child care. I urge you to pass this legislation to support our workforce and the small business community of child care providers.

Thank you,
Lindsey Vigoda
Colorado Director, Small Business Majority