

February 19, 2025

Senate Bill 833-Treatment Foster Care Homes-Child Care Stipends for private Providers
Senate Judicial Proceeds Committee
Position-Support

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sherrian Jones and I am writing to express my unwavering support for Senate Bill 833, a critical piece of legislation that proposes to review and reallocate a portion of the Department of Human Services' annual budget to be used to provide child care stipends to certain private treatment foster care homes to cover child care expenses. As someone deeply invested in the welfare of children and families within our foster care system, I cannot overstate the importance of this bill and its potential to significantly improve the lives of many.

I have been a therapeutic foster care parent for over 17 years. We have provided a home for many children over the past years and in several cases, childcare has been an issue. It is very disheartening when we have to say no to placements because of childcare. This should not be an issue for **therapeutic foster** care.

First of all, the waiting list to get a child into a childcare center is long and is often not an option due to the short term need when placement arrives. When enrolled in traditional daycare was an option, funds were not available or used at the entirety of the foster care stipend. Then there was a delay in receiving payments, which can be as much as two or three months. For that reason, some day care centers do not want to participate in the care of the child. It is unacceptable that daycare is not reimbursed at the cost of the care. The financial support that I can provide through this bill will allow me to take the money I am putting towards childcare and redirect it to other parts of the children's needs such as education and developmental aides as well as technology equipment to enhance the child's learning, communication and overall quality of life.

By supporting this bill, you are supporting me and the therapeutic foster care community with the childcare services that are greatly needed. This will also take away any initial hesitation if I will accept a child to my home by these services being more readily accessible.

Senate Bill 833 represents a commitment to supporting foster families by addressing two of the most challenges they face: financial strain and access to quality childcare. By reallocating funds to provide childcare assistance, this legislation demonstrates a recognition of the value and importance of foster families in our community. It acknowledges the sacrifices they make and offers tangible support to ensure they can continue their vital work without compromising on the quality of care or financial well being.

Sincerely,
Sherrian Jones