Child Care Collective Bargaining Act
Clears Senate Health, Human Services and Housing Committee

St. Paul, MN – Legislation authorizing home-based child care providers to bargain collectively with the State of Minnesota has cleared the Senate Health, Human Services and Housing Committee. This legislation would improve care for children and make it more affordable for working parents.

“Family child care providers are more than babysitters,” said bill author Sen. Sandy Pappas (DFL-St. Paul). “These women deserve respect for doing one of the toughest jobs imaginable-helping raise our children. They are professionals who are experienced, smart, dedicated and loving.”

This bill includes both licensed and legally unlicensed providers who receive subsidies from the Child Care Assistance Program because all children need to be prepared for school and success in life.

Beltrami County child care provider Marilyn Geller said, “As a union, we give child care providers an opportunity to have a voice just as I have an opportunity to have a voice in today’s hearing. What we are asking for in obtaining collective bargaining rights is the right to be recognized as professionals who want to be a part of guiding this profession in a positive, constructive direction and allow each child care provider the opportunity to grow in education and training in order to better prepare our young children for the world.”

Doreen Aristy, a New York child care provider and member of VOICE (Voice of Individual Childcare Educators) spoke of the positive impact a union has made for child care providers, children and parents in her state. “New York recognizes the right of child care providers to bargain collectively with the state. For us, it’s been a partnership for success. Working together, we’ve improved training and support for providers while increasing quality and affordability for parents,” said Aristy. “Minnesota should learn from our experience.”

Half of Minnesota’s children are not prepared for kindergarten and many are living in poverty with poor nutrition. To address these urgent problems, the state needs to help more children eat and learn in the homes of family child care providers. Ensuring that providers have direct input on the state’s child care system will help the state close the achievement gap and better prepare children for school.