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**Testimony Concerning the Child Care Crisis in New York State
Submitted to the NY Senate Standing Committee on Children & Families**

Written testimony by Diane Abram

Dear Senator Brisport, Members of the NY Senate Children & Families Committee on the child care crisis in New York. My name is Diane Abram, a group family daycare provider of Toot-Toot Daycare on Buffalo's east side. I have provided a high-quality childcare program in my home for over 32 years. I am a family child care provider, founder of Workforce Solutions Consortium an organization for family daycare providers and parents, steering committee member of the Western New York Action Team Please accept my written testimony on behalf of early childhood educators in both family daycare and daycare center businesses. I offer my comments as an early childhood educator.

I am writing to you today on behalf of both family child care providers and center-based providers. We want to thank you for the past year's stabilization grants. It was a powerful start in acknowledging the importance of early child care development and supporting child daycare businesses. These businesses need an increase in your continued financial support as families and communities continue to rely on these early child daycare businesses.

Quality child care programs significantly help kids build a strong foundation for success stretching well into adulthood. Early brain development has a lasting impact on a child's ability to learn and succeed in school and IN life. In fact, from birth to age 5, a child's brain develops more than at any other time in life. Meaning the quality of a child's experiences in the first few years of life – positive or negative – directly helps shape their brains development.

At birth, the average baby's brain is about a quarter of the size of the average adult brain. Incredibly, it doubles in size in the first year. It keeps growing to about 80% of adult size by age 3 and 90% – nearly full grown – by age 5.

Decades of early childhood research studies demonstrate that children with access to high quality early childhood development and health opportunities are more prepared for kindergarten, do better in school, and are more likely to graduate and enroll in college. They also tend to be healthier and more productive members of society.

The return on investment from early childhood is extraordinary."

Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

90% of brain growth occurs before kindergarten. And the skills and abilities employers are looking for — focus, self-discipline, motivation and collaboration — all start to take root in the first five years of life. The ROI from investing in quality early childhood education programs for kids birth to age 5 is well established, with strong, positive effects on:

- Kindergarten readiness
- Language, math and social skills
- K-12 test scores

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- High school graduation
- College enrollment

Investing in early childhood programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers is the only proven strategy to produce such returns. It also correlates strongly to less crime and less dependence on social services later in life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions or share success stories of adults that were infants, toddlers, and preschool children in my group family daycare home twenty plus years ago. I can be reached at toottootdaycare@gmail.com.