

Cooper, Kathy

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From: GRWoomer@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2008 6:09 PM
To: IRRC
Subject: Minimum Standards for childcare

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Gail Woomer
247 Maurice Ct.
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
March 12, 2008

Arthur Coccodrilli, Chairman
IRRC
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Chairman Coccodrilli;

On March 10, 2008, the Department of Public Welfare submitted final-form child care facility regulations to the General Assembly and to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC). The child care facility regulations provide minimum standards for the operation of approximately 9,000 child care centers, group child care homes and family child care homes that serve over 300,000 children. The regulations were last updated in April 1992. I am asking you to support passage of the final-form child care regulations.

The child care facility regulations protect the health, safety and rights of children and reduce risks to children in child care facilities. The final form regulation addresses protection of children, reflects current best practice and research, improves clarity, and provides clear, consistent information to the provider and parent community about what the Departments will examine when it conducts a visit. Highlights of the final-form regulations include the following:

- **Updated health and safety requirements to reflect best practices & research** - New research has resulted in changes to health and safety recommendations regarding SIDS prevention, playground safety, staff tuberculosis testing, removal of recalled toys and equipment, disposable gloves in first aid kit, maximum indoor temperature and diapering.
- **Made the regulations easier to read and more accessible to providers and parents** – Twelve statements of policy have been released since 1992 and must be incorporated into the regulations themselves. These include important requirements relating to emergency plans, supervision of children, Syrup of Ipecac, release of children, posting inspection summaries, Departmental access and swimming pool accessibility
- **Updated the regulations to include correct reference to other applicable laws** –By referencing the correct current laws, providers, parents and the public will be better able to locate additional information about laws that impact the operation of a child care facility including requirements relating to certificate of occupancy, vehicle safety, childhood immunizations and children with special needs.
- **Improved opportunity for facility compliance** - Areas of typical noncompliance were examined and when possible, changes are proposed that will balance assistance to the facilities in compliance while ensuring minimum health and safety at a facility.

I am asking you to support the final-form child care regulation in order to advance the protection of children receiving care in more than 9,000 child care facilities in Pennsylvania. Thank you for your anticipated support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Gail Woomer, MN, RN, IBCLC
Childcare Health Consultant
Clinical faculty University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing