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October 19, 2006

Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

SUBJECT: **Regulation #14-506 (#2539)**

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

This letter is written in support of Regulation #14-506 (#2539) regarding Chapters 3270, 3280, 3290, and 3300, Child Care Facilities.

I serve not only as the director of Child Care Information Services (CCIS) of Crawford County, but also volunteer my time as co-chair of our local county PA Safe Kids Coalition. I am also the mom of two grown children. My CCIS staff is comprised of ladies who are also mothers of children and grandchildren of various ages.

We all work very hard at our jobs because we are passionate about one thing – families become stronger when their children receive child care in environments that are high quality, safe, sane, and stimulating. We can say that to our client parents because we know that each child care provider in our Department of Public Welfare (DPW) database and each child care center, group family child care home, and family child care home has met at least the minimum certification standards to provide these very services.

Many child care providers are also now striving very hard through the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS program to receive the necessary grant funds to continue to improve the quality of their programs, and are proud of being able to say to their communities “we care about quality”. The Keystone STARS initiative makes quality affordable to obtain through grant opportunities that are currently available to every qualifying certified provider. This means that child care locations – profit or nonprofit – stand on equal footing in improving their programs and retaining more qualified staff. The Keystone STARS program uses these very regulations as their “kick-off point” or minimum standard from which providers can excel as they progress through STARS. It becomes imperative that every provider knows what standard of care is expected in their facility, in order to make available to vulnerable children the very best environment possible. Many of these children spend most of their productive waking hours in their early formative years in certified child care settings. When all facilities operate under the same regulations – profit or nonprofit – we (as CCIS employees) are most able to educate parents and the community as to what minimum standard they can expect. As parents know their children are in certified facilities that are high quality, safe, sane and

an affiliate agency



stimulating, they can enter the workplace in full confidence their children are properly cared for, and as parents they can then concentrate on being productive employees.

All of this could become compromised if there is no minimum standard which would occur if any child care certified location is exempt from meeting these certification regulations. Putting even one child at risk in even one non-certified child care location compromises our efforts to educate parents on high-quality safe, sane, and stimulating child care. It can send the message that we do not believe in quality for every child in every location.

It is for these reasons, I am writing in support of these certification Chapters 3270, 3280, 3290, and 3300.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathy Kosarek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kathy Kosarek, Director
Child Care Information Services
Of Crawford County