



Attachment E
COUNCIL FOR A
STRONG AMERICA
COLORADO

House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Re: SB20-126

Dear Members of the House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee,

We write as retired admirals and generals who live in Colorado, and as members of the national security organization Mission: Readiness, to respectfully request that you **support the passage of SB20-126, Concerning the Operation of a Licensed Family Child Care Home in a Common Interest Community**. This bill would ensure that homeowners have the right to operate a licensed family child care program from home.

We are deeply concerned that, according to the Department of Defense, **70 percent of young Coloradans between the ages of 17 and 24 are ineligible for military service**, in part because of poor academic achievement.

Mission: Readiness supports programs that increase children's access to high-quality early care and education. These programs help ensure that children get off to a strong start and are prepared for academic success. Additionally, they can help prepare young people to live healthy lives and prevent later behavioral issues.

The importance of a child's earliest years cannot be overstated. There is scientific consensus that brain development from birth to age five sets the foundation for children's future success. During these years, more than one million new neural connections form every second. This early foundation informs children's cognition, health and behavior throughout life.

Approximately 51 percent of all residents in Colorado live in an area where there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots. The availability of care is even more limited for families who have infants and toddlers. Between 2010 and 2018, the number of licensed child care slots in Colorado for infants fell by about 11 percent, while the population of infants did not change. This drop in capacity was due mainly to a decrease in family child care homes.

There are more than 200,000 working parents in our state with children under the age of three. We have a demonstrated need for more child care slots in Colorado and SB20-126 would reduce unnecessary barriers in order to increase the supply of licensed care.

Our experience as military leaders has taught us just how critical early care and education is to living a healthy and productive life. There is even new evidence showing how early learning

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programs can help reduce America's high rate of childhood obesity, another factor impacting military service. Quality child care provides children with the right start in life so that they can grow up to be productive citizens -- whether they choose to join the Armed Forces or not. That is why we urge you to support SB20-126.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

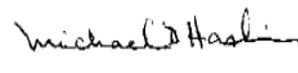
Very Respectfully,



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U.S. Air Force (Retired)



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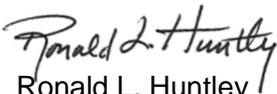
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