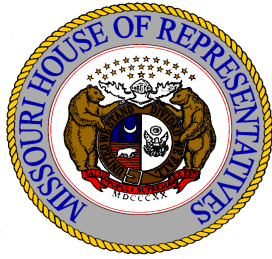


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COMMITTEES:
Budget
Ethics
Higher Education
Subcommittee on Appropriations
-Education
Subcommittee on Appropriations-
Health, Mental Health and Social
Services

Kip Kendrick

State Representative
District 45

March 3, 2020

Director Jennifer Tidball
Department of Social Services
205 Jefferson St.
Jefferson City, Missouri 65103

RE: Mary Lee Johnston Community Learning Center

Director Tidball,

It has been brought to my attention that Children's Division is revoking Mary Lee Johnston Community Learning Center's license for self-reporting an incident that occurred at the center in December. It is my understanding that Children's Division considered seven incidents related to supervision from the past 10 years all of which were self-reported by MLJ staff and corrective actions were taken by staff in each case. At no time was a child harmed or injured at the Center. At no time has a parent removed a child from the Center due to supervision concerns.

This severely punitive decision by Children's Division to revoke MLJ's license for self-reporting a mistake will have a very real and chilling effect on all self-reports and put more children at risk of harm around the state. This decision sends a strong message to all providers that if they self-report, they will be severely punished. That is not how Missouri should do business. That is not the Missouri I know.

Not only does Children's Division decision to severely punish those who self-report send the wrong message to all other providers, it will also harm many low income families in my district. This decision will negatively impact 87% of children at MLJ - 33 families and 40 children, 27 of whom are infants and toddlers by forcing them all to find another daycare provider within a 30-day window. Let me express to you how difficult it is to find infant/toddler care in Columbia at this time.

I am very concerned about this matter. I respectfully urge you to reconsider this decision. I respectfully request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kip Kendrick".

State Representative District 45