



Betsy Cummings | Virginia



Betsy's story

Betsy Cummings is a retired member of the U.S. Navy stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. She gave birth to her son Dylan in April 2010 at a Naval medical center, where she was instructed to never lay Dylan on his stomach to sleep. After a six-week maternity leave, she placed Dylan in a church child care facility. At the time, Betsy was unaware the child care facility she chose was not licensed nor regulated by the state. After returning to work for only one week, she received a phone call from the child care center informing her there had been an incident. Upon arrival at the church, a paramedic told her Dylan had died. The child care director told Betsy that they had fed Dylan, burped him, and laid him down for a nap. When she questioned whether Dylan was placed on his stomach or his back, the director assured her that he was put on his back. The next morning, however, she received a call from the medical examiner, explaining Dylan was a perfectly healthy baby who had passed away because he had been laid on his stomach for a nap. In the following days the Department of Social Services released their report on the incident and Betsy learned that because the child care center was located within a church, it was exempt from licensing requirements.

Betsy is now determined to help change the laws governing child care licensing and regulation, to prevent incidents similar to what she endured.

Child Care Stats in VA
The cost of center care for 2 children in Virginia is nearly twice the annual cost of tuition at a four year college.

U.S. businesses lose approximately \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of child care breakdowns.

There are 393,407 children under the age of 6 in Virginia who could be in need of child care.

Congressional Request: 2017

CCAOA is requesting a \$1.4 billion increase (over the FY 2016 level) for next year to ensure that nearly 217,000 children and families don't lose access to care, and also to help states meet the requirements of the 2014 CCDBG law.

We ask that you co-sponsor the "Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act of 2017" (H.R. 947/S.337), which would:

- Provide up to 12 weeks of leave for working families
- Enable workers to earn up to 66% of their monthly income while on leave
- Cover workers in all companies, no matter size
- Be administered through the newly created Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave

We also ask that you co-sponsor the "Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act of 2017," which would expand and enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to reflect the realities of modern-day child care costs. The PACE Act would make CDCTC refundable and increase the credit rate, which would greatly benefit millions of working families struggling to pay their monthly bills as child care is the greatest expense after housing.