

SOUTH CAROLINA

KATHRYN MARTIN

KATHRYN'S STORY

After a short six weeks of maternity leave, Kathryn was forced to find a child care provider for her daughter, Kellie Rynn, and return to work because she was the primary health insurance account holder for her family. Kathryn and her husband diligently researched licensed and registered child care in their area, identified a match, performed a background check, and read reviews on the Department of Social Services website.

On February 21, 2014, Kellie Rynn died in her child care provider's care. She was 3 months and 14 days old. On the day of this tragedy, this child care provider allegedly said she was only caring for the six children she was permitted to have. But 14 more children were found in the basement with her teenage daughter, two in a bedroom unsupervised with a loaded gun in reach, and one toddler outside alone. The owner of the child care home said all staff were CPR-certified, but in fact, none of the staff were, and had to take instruction over the phone from a 911 operator when Kellie Rynn was found unresponsive. Kathryn and her husband were told Kellie Rynn passed away from an anoxic brain injury caused by suffocation due to unsafe bedding. The provider was charged with child neglect for the children hidden in the basement, unlawful operation of a family child care home, and obstruction of justice, but was never charged with the death of Kellie Rynn. The



provider eventually accepted a plea deal for 18 months of house arrest, five years of probation, and 23 hours of community service.

Kathryn has spent the years since the death of her daughter fighting to educate other families and providers about safe and healthy child care practices so no other family goes through the tragedy her family went through. Kellie Rynn's Law was introduced this year. It is similar to Joseph's Law in Virginia, requiring charges of child neglect for any caregiver who causes the death or serious injury of a child in their care. She is also working with the state to help pass a law that requires all caregivers (registered and licensed) to take safe sleep training annually.

CHILD CARE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

- A single parent in South Carolina spends 31.7% of their income for center-based infant care.
- Married parents of two children living at the poverty line pay 51.6% of their household income for center-based child care.
- The cost of infant care in South Carolina is almost twice the annual cost of tuition at a four year state college.

2019 CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST

Provide a \$5 billion increase to FY 2020 Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding to ensure more children and families gain access to high-quality, affordable, and safe child care.