



COALITION OF

# child care advocates

OF BC



*Working together for a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and accountable.*

The Honourable Christy Clark  
Premier of British Columbia  
Box 9041  
Station PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012

Dear Premier Clark,

It recently came to our attention that while in West Kelowna promoting the provincial initiative to ensure every home in British Columbia has a working smoke alarm you gave attention to Edleun, a publicly traded commercial child care chain that recently began purchasing existing child care centres in BC.

The issue of working smoke detectors is clearly an important and worthwhile safety issue for a Premier to highlight and support. However, what is not so clearly understood is why a Premier would choose to provide this public relations opportunity for a for-profit, 'big-box' commercial child care chain, such as Edleun, when the Kelowna area has long standing providers of quality child care, available for photo opportunities.

We trust you are aware that the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, as well as organizations across Canada and internationally, has raised serious concerns regarding for-profit big-box commercial child care chains. As with other commercial enterprises their primary duty is to maximize the return on investment for their owners, shareholders and investors. We expect you would agree that a provider of child care services, particularly ones that accept public operating funds, should instead put the needs of children and families first?

To date, commercial child care chains in BC are eligible for the Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) that the province provides to licensed child care operators, even while strong evidence indicates that commercial child care is not the solution to the current crisis of long waiting lists, high parent fees and low staff wages. In times of apparently scarce public resources and fiscal restraint, we should be ensuring that our tax dollars are spent in ways that put children and families ahead of profit.

That is why our organization is calling for an immediate moratorium on public funds to any new commercial child care expansion.

We anticipate that you are however looking for a solution to BC's child care crisis to meet your Jobs Plan and to put Families First. Thousands of British Columbians, as well as municipalities, school boards, academics, businesses, labour groups and community organizations across the province all agree the \$10/day Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning is the solution government should implement. The long and growing list of supporters is enclosed along with a copy of the Plan and supporting Fact Sheets.

Hopefully your decision to provide an opportunity to Edleun for a media profile through your visit to West Kelowna was not deliberate. We look forward to further discussions with your new Ministers and staff on details for implementation of the \$10/day Plan as well as the moratorium on public funds flowing to commercial child care expansion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Harney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Harney, Chairperson  
On behalf of the CCCABC

Encl. Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning  
3 Fact Sheets  
Current list of Supporters of the Plan  
Kelowna Capital News article – June 27, 2012 edition  
West Kelowna News article – June 26, 2012 edition