

K-W MPP's bill to fund not-for-profit child care fails to pass second reading ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

A bill to have the province fund exclusively not-for-profit child care spaces proposed by Kitchener-Waterloo MPP Catherine Fife has been quashed at Queen's Park.

Bill 98 went for second reading Thursday afternoon, but will go no further following a vote. Twelve MPPs supported it and 35 were against it – 26 of whom were Liberals.

"That Kathleen Wynne's Liberals would stand and vote against not-for-profit care was a real disappointment to me, and to parents and child care advocates around the province," Fife said in a release after the vote.

"By committing provincial funding to not-for-profit and public child care, we could have given more families access to the affordable, quality care they need for their kids."

Not-for-profit meets needs of families

Fife said she was inspired to bring the legislation forward by her own experiences with daycare. Her children thrived in a not-for-profit centre but did not do as well in a for-profit centre where there was a high turnover of staff and quality of care was trumped by a desire to make money.

She said she left her job because she couldn't find quality daycare.

"The people of this province, the parents of this province and the children in Ontario are not interested in poor quality child care," Fife said earlier in the day at a press conference.

"Let's make sure that those dollars, those tax dollars, are invested holistically into a child care system which actually will meet the needs of the families of this province."

'Child care crisis'

Carolyn Ferns of Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care joined Fife at the press conference and called Ontario's current system a "patchwork."

"We have a child care crisis in Ontario," she said.

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She added Fife's bill would help parents who struggle to pay the high cost of child care. As well, it would help early childhood educators find stable work.

But most of all, centres that aren't focused on making a profit will focus on the children, Ferns said.

"There is simply no room in Ontario's child care expansion for profit. We need every dollar of this money going to our kids," Fern said.

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