

Ontario child-care changes to be protested by MPP Gretzky ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

Windsor West NDP MPP Lisa Gretzky will present petition at Queen's Park, denouncing proposed regulation changes for licensed child care.

A delegation of Windsor-area families, child-care centre operators, and child-care professionals on Tuesday will deliver Gretzky the petition signed by more than 5,000 people.

The petition is signed by people who are demanding a halt to government proposals to lower current provincial age standards for licensed child care.

The government is moving forward with changes to regulations that Gretzky, and others, claim "pose potential safety risks to 12- to 18-month-olds, who will now be cared for alongside toddlers up to two years of age."

"The new regulations also hold serious implications for the progress of child development and will result in an overall reduction in number of infant child care places," a news release issued by CUPE reads, in part.

The proposed changes would create new age classifications for children and require more adults at licensed child-care centres.

Current classifications:

- Infants: Younger than 18 months.
- Toddlers: 18 months to 30 months old.
- Preschoolers: Children over 30 months old.

Proposed classifications:

- Infants: Younger than 12 months.
- Toddlers: 12 months to 24 months old.
- Preschoolers: Children over 24 months old.

Ontario Education Minister Liz Sandals previously told CBC News childcare ratios and age groupings have not been changed in decades and are workable.

"The proposed changes to age grouping, ratios, group size and staff qualifications will strengthen quality, increase access and reflect the feedback we received from childcare licensees," she said in a written statement.

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