

Good Afternoon,

I'm reaching out because I recently learned of the Governor's proposal to reduce funding for child care programs by an estimated \$9 million dollars. First, thank you for your work on Act 76 last session. It is already making a positive difference in the lives of early educators, children and families. My four year old son, Noah, attends a high-quality pre-school called Robin's Nest Children's Center in the Old North End of Burlington. We live on one-income and the cost of childcare (~\$11,000/year) delayed my ability to purchase a home for the first three years of his life. I've also delayed other essential purchases, like upgrading our heating system and roof repairs, due to the financial strain of child care. Since Act 76 was implemented, the Center has been able to offer retention bonuses to teachers. The Executive Director is exploring the addition of employee benefits to help retain staff. The promise of a more expansive CCFAP subsidy for families like mine feels like a light at the end of a long, difficult tunnel. It will be a game-changer for low and middle-income families this April and the child care programs that support them.

These are just a few examples of how Act 76 is having a positive impact on every day Vermonters. Please give Act 76 a chance to take effect. It has only begun to roll out and, from what I've seen, it's working as envisioned. Please reject the Governor's proposed cuts to funding for child care.

Sincerely,

Helen Reid