

Eric Sorkin
Runamok, Owner
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Dear Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for your thoughtful attention to financing child care in Vermont.

I am the owner of Runamok, a maple syrup and specialty food manufacturing business with about 100 employees working in Fairfax, Cambridge and Bolton. As a business owner, I strongly support the efforts of the state legislature to find a solution to provide all Vermonters with access to quality, affordable child care. It's a long standing problem that is only growing more dire.

I am not a subject matter expert on child care. However, I do know firsthand that the current lack of accessible child care keeps Vermonters out of the workforce and impacts our ability to recruit and retain employees. When it comes to considering a solution, I agree that there must be a systemic solution, including investing state revenue to fully solve this crisis.

Last week I testified before your colleagues in the House Human Services Committee, and shared that I'm a business owner and as such I will readily submit that I do not believe every problem demands a government solution. However, in this case, if you don't take legislative action this problem will simply persist. There is just no reasonable hope this will get better unless the government steps in. Business owners are queuing up, asking the state to please fix this issue, and consistently stating that we are willing to pay the modest cost. That is quite a mandate for action and I am really glad that the legislature is prepared to meet the moment.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, and in the meantime, thank you again for your leadership on child care.