Dear Members of the House Committee on Human Services,

I am writing to ask you to invest a portion of the $1.25 billion stimulus package into UVM's Campus Children's School. UVM's president announced last week the closure of the School, with all employees laid off and families who had counted on that childcare and preschool now without, including my own family ---- although our son Elliott was finishing out this last year, we were still hoping for a few more crucial months of the School being open to see him through and help with the transition to kindergarten.

As I'm sure you're hearing from many voices, the School's deficit has been reduced over time and there are several possibilities in place to further reduce the operating deficit.

Specifically, I am asking that you allocate $500,000 of the stimulus money to support UVM's Campus Children's School for one year, contingent on the agreement that UVM will use that year to work with faculty and staff, as well as the College of Education and Social Services to reorganize to get the School to a place where it is financially sustainable.

As you know, many childcare centers in Vermont are closing due to the effects of COVID. We believe working families cannot afford to lose more slots because it will result in parents not being able to work to provide for their families, and thus create a cascading cycle of disadvantage which will disproportionately affect women and people of color.

The Campus Children's School has been invaluable to myself and my wife for our ability to continue our work full-time at UVM while having a young child. I would hate to see other faculty and staff deprived of that resource going forward, and would also hate for the broader community to lose such an example of high-quality, evidence-based child care and preschool.

Thank you for your time and your efforts, and for considering this request.

Regards,
Keith Burt

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