

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Health and Welfare to which was referred House Bill
3 No. 531 entitled “An act relating to Vermont’s child care and early learning
4 system” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends
5 that the Senate propose to the House that the bill be amended by striking out all
6 after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 * * * Legislative Intent * * *

8 Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

9 It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

10 (1) Vermont strives to enhance the capacity and affordability of the
11 child care and early learning system and support the retention, growth, and
12 professional development of its workforce;

13 (2) investments and initiatives set forth in this act are meant to
14 compliment the anticipated redesign of the Child Care Financial Assistance
15 Program, which shall be monitored by the General Assembly; and

16 (3) investments set forth in this act are meant to be the first of many
17 aimed at strengthening families and the economy.

18 * * * Child Care Financial Assistance Program * * *

19 Sec. 2. 33 V.S.A. § 3512 is amended to read:

20 § 3512. CHILD CARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM;

21 ELIGIBILITY

1 (B) 75 percent of the available financial assistance benefit for
2 families at 150 percent of the current federal poverty guidelines;

3 (C) 50 percent of the available financial assistance benefit for
4 families at 200 percent of the current federal poverty guidelines; and

5 (D) 10 percent of the available financial assistance benefit for
6 families at 300 percent of the current federal poverty guidelines; and

7 **(2) align rates of reimbursement for preschool age children**
8 **participating in CCFAP in fiscal year 2020 with the market rates reported**
9 **on the 2012 Vermont Market Rate Survey, align rates of reimbursement**
10 **for school age children participating in CCFAP in fiscal year 2020 with**
11 **the market rates reported on the 2010 Vermont Market Rate Survey,**
12 and maintain rates of reimbursement for infants and toddlers participating in
13 CCFAP in fiscal year 2020 with the market rates reported on the 2017
14 Vermont Market Rate Survey.

15 * * * Early Child Care and Development Program Grant Funds * * *

16 Sec. 4. REALLOCATION OF EARLY CHILD CARE AND

17 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FUNDS AND PROGRAM

18 CESSATION

19 In fiscal year 2020, any funds proposed to be appropriated to the
20 Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division for the
21 Early Care and Child Development Grant Program established pursuant to

1 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 85, §§ E.318 and E.318.1 and 2018 (Sp. Sess.)
2 Acts and Resolves No. 11, § E.318 shall be available to fund the Child Care
3 Financial Assistance Program in fiscal year 2020 and thereafter. The Early
4 Care and Child Development Grant Program shall cease operation on June 30,
5 2019.

6 **Sec. 4a. 33 V.S.A. § 3515 is added to read:**

7 **§ 3515. INFANT AND TODDLER CHILD CARE PROVIDER GRANTS**

8 **(a) There is established an infant and toddler child care provider grant**
9 **program administered by the Division for the purpose of expanding infant**
10 **and toddler child care capacity. The Division shall award grants to new**
11 **or existing center-based child care programs and family child care homes**
12 **in accordance with subsections (b) and (c) of this section.**

13 **(b) An eligible applicant shall:**

14 **(1) be a regulated, privately-operated center-based child care**
15 **program or family child care home in good standing;**

16 **(2) participate in the Child Care Financial Assistance Program**
17 **(CCFAP) and maintain the enrollment of CCFAP supported children at**
18 **30 percent;**

19 **(3) provide year-round, full-day child care and early learning**
20 **services for infants and toddlers; and**

21 **(4) participate in the SStep Ahead Recognition System (STARS).**

1 **(c) In determining how to distribute grants pursuant to this section, the**
2 **Division shall give priority to center-based child care programs and family**
3 **child care homes operating or opening in underserved regions of the State.**

4 **(d) The Division shall provide grants pursuant to this section as funds**
5 **allow. Center-based child care programs or family child care homes**
6 **receiving a grant shall remain in compliance with the Division’s rules,**
7 **continue participation in STARS, and maintain high enrollment of**
8 **children receiving a CCFAP subsidy.**

9 **Sec. 4b. APPROPRIATION; INFANT AND TODDLER CHILD CARE**

10 **PROVIDER GRANT**

11 **In fiscal year 2020, \$1,250,000.00 is appropriated from the General**
12 **Fund to the Department for Children and Families’ Child Development**
13 **Division for the purpose of funding the infant and toddler child care**
14 **provider grants set forth in Sec. 4a of this act.**

15 * * * Bright Futures Information System * * *

16 **Sec. 5. BRIGHT FUTURES INFORMATION SYSTEM;**

17 **MODERNIZATION PLAN**

18 **In fiscal year 2020, up to \$100,000.00 appropriated for the Child Care**
19 **Financial Assistance Program pursuant to Sec. 3 of this act may be used by the**
20 **Department for Children and Families’ Child Development Division for the**
21 **purpose of developing a modernization plan for the Bright Futures Information**

1 System. On or before Dec. 1, 2019, the Commissioner shall submit a report to
2 the House Committees on Appropriations and on Human Services and to the
3 Senate Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare providing:

4 (1) an initial project plan and timeline;

5 (2) a fiscal analysis of the plan; and

6 (3) the project team tasked with overseeing the project's

7 implementation.

8 Sec. 5a. BRIGHT FUTURES INFORMATION SYSTEM;

9 MODERNIZATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND

10 IMPLEMENTATION

11 (a) In fiscal year 2020, \$500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund
12 to the Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division to
13 begin **development** of the project plan **established** pursuant to Sec. 5 of this
14 act.

15 **(b) In fiscal year 2020, \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated one time from the**
16 **General Fund to the Department for Children and Families' Child**
17 **Development Division to begin implementation of the plan established**
18 **pursuant to Sec. 5 of this act.**

19 (c) Any unused funds appropriated pursuant to Sec. 3 of this act **or**
20 **pursuant to subsection (a) of this section** shall be reserved to begin
21 implementation of the plan developed pursuant to **Sec. 5 of this act.**

1 **(c) An individual shall not simultaneously receive funds from the**
2 **Vermont Department of Labor to complete a paid internship in regulated,**
3 **privately operated center-based child care programs and family child care**
4 **homes while receiving funds pursuant to this section.**

5 **Sec. 7b. TECHNICAL CENTERS; CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

6 **ASSOCIATE CREDENTIAL**

7 **(a) In fiscal year 2020, \$50,000.00 is appropriated from the General**
8 **Fund to the Department for Children and Families' Child Development**
9 **Division to facilitate the implementation of the Council for Professional**
10 **Regulation's Child Development Associate Credential curriculum in**
11 **technical centers throughout the State.**

12 **(b) Any unused funds appropriated pursuant to this section shall be**
13 **reserved to fund grants set forth in Sec. 7a of this act for students who**
14 **completed the Child Development Associate Credential at a Vermont**
15 **technical center.**

16 * * * Evaluation of Expenditures and Programs * * *

17 **Sec. 8. REPORT; EVALUATION OF EXPENDITURES AND PROGRAMS**

18 **On or before January 1, 2024, the Commissioner for Children and Families,**
19 **in consultation with stakeholders, shall submit a report to the House**
20 **Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and**
21 **Welfare:**

1 (1) evaluating the effectiveness of the expenditure in the Child Care
2 Financial Assistance Program set forth in Sec. 3 of this act, the **grant**
3 **incentivizing the child care profession set forth in Sec. 7a of this act, and**
4 **the expenditure for technical centers' curriculum development set forth in**
5 **Sec. 7b of this act;**

6 (2) making recommendations as to whether the expenditures and
7 programs in **Secs. 3, 7a, and 7b of this act** should be continued and, if so, the
8 appropriate funding amount and source; and

9 (3) evaluating how the expenditures and programs in **Secs. 3, 7a, and 7b**
10 **of this act** contribute to Vermont's children and young people reaching their
11 potential pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 2311.

12 * * * Variance for Educational and Experiential Requirements * * *

13 Sec. 9. EDUCATIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL VARIANCE

14 (a) For individuals operating or employed in a registered family child care
15 home or as a director or teacher associate in a center-based program for 10 or
16 more years prior to September 1, 2016, the Commissioner for Children and
17 Families or designee may issue a variance to the Child Development
18 Division's rule regarding educational and experiential requirements to allow an
19 individual to maintain employment in that same role regardless of whether the
20 family child care provider, family child care assistant, director, or teacher
21 associate intends to attain the otherwise necessary educational requirements.

1 To be eligible for a variance, the family child care provider, family child care
2 assistant, director, or teacher associate shall:

3 (1) work continuously in a regulated program with a full license in good
4 standing; and

5 (2) meet the Divisions' educational and experiential requirements in
6 place prior to the adoption of the new rule, which was effective beginning
7 September 1, 2016.

8 (b) The Commissioner or designee shall review any violation occurring in a
9 regulated program where a family child care provider, family child care
10 assistant, director, or teacher associate is under variance and may revoke the
11 variance granted by this section depending upon the seriousness and
12 circumstances of the violation.

13 (c) Any variance granted under this section shall be terminated on July 1,
14 2024, and extensions shall not be granted beyond that date.

15 * * * Children's Integrated Services * * *

16 Sec. 10. REIMBURSEMENT RATES; PROVIDERS OF CHILDREN'S
17 INTEGRATED SERVICES

18 In fiscal year 2020, \$309,714.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to
19 the Department for Children and Families' Children's Integrated Services for
20 the purpose of increasing reimbursement rates to providers.

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* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

(Committee vote: _____)

Senator _____

FOR THE COMMITTEE