

Memorandum

To: Senator Westman, Senator Hardy
From: Ken Schatz, DCF Commissioner
Re: H.742 and Child Care
Date: March 20, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on H.742. As a threshold issue, we at DCF understand that funding issues and the need for supplemental appropriations in order to respond to COVID-19 will be addressed separately and not in this bill. DCF is in the beginning stages of identifying significant financial impacts on our programs and services as a result of this pandemic.

With respect to H.742, please see the following comments:

- Section 6a – DCF requests that employees of residential treatment programs and shelters are added to the list of protected employees in this section.
- Sections 7 and 8 – we appreciate that this section is included. Under a declared state of emergency, DCF does not want to go through the emergency rulemaking process in order to amend or waive its rules in responding to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Section 22 – DCF requests that residential treatment programs for youth, including Woodside, be added to this section to be clear that medically-related isolation for youth related to the coronavirus does not equate to seclusion of the youth.
- **New section in this bill** or another bill that addresses supplemental appropriations – DCF requests that the budget for extraordinary financial relief for childcare providers is expanded beyond the statutory limit set forth in 33 V.S.A. §3505(a)(1), which limits these funds to 0.5 percent of the child care financial assistance funds.

