



Date: February 8, 2021
To: Chairs Hooper and Kitchel and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations
From: Dr. Morgan Crossman, Executive Director, Building Bright Futures
Re: Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council Legislative Allocation

Good evening. My name is Dr. Morgan Crossman, the Executive Director of the [Building Bright Futures](#) (BBF). Building Bright Futures is mandated by Vermont's Act 104 and the Federal Head Start Act to be the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood. **We are asking to increase our legislative allocation by \$261,000 annually to continually meet our state and federal mandates. We are confident that you care deeply for Vermont's youngest children and their families and the BBF Network is the systemic mechanism that improves outcomes for all children prenatal to age eight and their families in Vermont.** This is accomplished by building and sustaining an integrated, high quality, equitable and accessible system of services. BBF brings together a network of over 450 early childhood stakeholders across sectors to monitor Vermont's early childhood system and outcomes for children and families.

BBF consistently uses evidence and data to inform policy, builds the capacity of our state agencies, and ensures integration and coordination in our early childhood system so families have access to what they need. **BBF also quickly and efficiently gathers and reports data and stories from all corners of the state. For example, for testimony last month, within 24 hours, BBF captured 69 responses from all 12 regions of the state, across 32 sectors and with 60% identifying as a parent.** As stated by a parent in our network, *"This is the one place I feel my voice is heard and it matters."*

Increasing the base allocation is critical for BBF to continue to respond to requests from the legislature, state and community partners, and to adapt to the ever-changing needs of the early childhood system to meet our state and federal statutes. Our existing allocation of \$244,000 does not come close to supporting the work required in statute and does not represent parity with other advisory bodies in the state of Vermont. Building Bright Futures requests an additional \$261,000, a total of \$505,000, for our work through the AHS, DCF, Child Development Division budget. **We are here to fulfil our mandate to ensure that each and every child has the best opportunity to thrive. We need your increased support to be able to do this.** Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Morgan K. Crossman, Ph.D., M.A.
Executive Director, Building Bright Futures
(802) 881-1264
mcrossman@buildingbrightfutures.org