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## **February 21, 2023 Testimony to Vermont House and Senate Committees on Appropriations**

My name is Seth Hibbert and I am on the communications team for Vermont Afterschool.

I live in Williston with my wife, Kate, and our 8-year-old son, Lewis, and I'm here today to ask for your support for universal afterschool in Vermont in 2024.

Specifically, I'm asking you to support the governor's proposal to increase CCFAP by \$7 million in order to increase Vermont families' access to afterschool and summer programs.

And to support the language in the budget bill to create a grant structure for cannabis sale tax funds allocated to expanding access to afterschool and summer programs.

I'm able to speak with you today from my work desk uninterrupted by Lewis because he's currently building with Magna Tiles in a Williston afterschool program. A program that consistently turns away working parents because there aren't enough spaces to meet the demand.

And this summer, I'll be able to continue working this full-time job to support my family because my wife and I were lucky enough to register Lewis for summer camps in the 9 minutes it took before each of them filled up.

I'm asking for your support because for every child like Lewis whose parents successfully navigated the afterschool and summer camp registration gauntlet, there's a child like Lewis's best friend Ewan, whose parents found themselves on endless waiting lists.

And that's not hyperbole. According to the America After 3PM national survey, for every Vermont child in an afterschool program, there's another child waiting to get in.

This does not sit well with me. And it's why I'm here today.

I believe we have a collective responsibility to ensure that all young Vermonters are safe, healthy, supported, and engaged when their parents are at work.

Please help make this happen by supporting universal afterschool in Vermont in 2024.

Thank you.