

Good morning,

I am reaching out in regard to the Governor's proposal to reduce funding for the Child Care Financial Assistance Program by an estimated \$9 million dollars. As the owner and director of a high-quality licensed child care program in Williston, I want to thank you for your work on this truly transformative child care bill. We have already seen tremendous benefits as Act 76 begins to unfold. The readiness payments that began last year have allowed our program to not only pay our teachers more, but also enabled our program to begin offering a much-deserved retirement plan, with a company match of employee contributions. Increased compensation and benefits offers our program, and programs like ours, a greater opportunity to attract and retain experienced and educated early educators. As we all know, the quality of early education is dependent upon the quality of the relationships and interactions of adults and students, so maintaining a well educated and experienced teaching team is critical to positive outcomes for our children. But it comes at a high cost to families. I know quite a few families that are counting on the expansion of eligibility for CCFAP to help them with the struggle to afford high quality early education for their children. Act 76 will truly impact the lives of Vermont's young children, their families, and the early childhood educators and their programs that support them. Cutting funding for this bill before it even has a chance to be fully implemented would be a great disservice to all Vermonters. Please reject the Governor's proposed cuts to funding for child care.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to Vermont's families.

Trisha Scharf
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