

February 18, 2025

Tammie AB Hazlett
166 REB Mountain Drive
Thetford Center, VT 05075

Subject: FY26 Budget

Dear Legislators,

I am a Vermont registered early childhood educator who provides early care and education services in my Thetford home. I also serve as a network leader in the Hartford region and serve on VT AEYCs task force for the professionalization of the field of Early Childhood Education.

I am writing to ask you to not reallocate funding for child care so that we do not set a precedent. In this critical moment, when our state faces significant challenges and growing demands in so many areas, Vermont needs to leverage this opportunity to continue to fix our child care system and not slow or put at risk this important progress we've fought so hard to achieve. We still have work to do to implement ACT 76 fully, and we need to protect these funds.

Currently, I have only one family eligible to receive CCFAP entitlements. Because of this, I am still not charging for the true cost of care. My families cannot afford to pay more.

As a network leader, I know my story is not unique. Many educators in my network have similar stories. If the vision of ACT 76 is not fully implemented, programs like mine will continue to be on the verge of closure due to insufficient funding, and the families we serve will continue to struggle. Other educators, I am happy to report, have seen the benefits of ACT 76. Their programs are now financially stable, and they will continue to provide high-quality care for Vermont children because of ACT 76.

In addition, as a member of the VT AEYC task force, it is my responsibility to listen to and consider the voices of every early childhood educator. This charge has given me many opportunities to listen to educators across the state, and I can speak without hesitation and say that ACT 76 is helping, but our work is not done.

We must focus on the future and work towards fully implementing ACT 76 so that every early childhood educator program and the families they serve receive the entitlements it promises.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Tammie AB Hazlett
Early Childhood Educator

