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Dear Chair Marcotte, Vice Chair Graning, and Representatives White, Bosch, Boutin, Carris-Duncan, Cooper, Duke, Micklus, Olson, and Priestley,
Thank you all for your hard work and service to Vermont. As you all prepare your budget memo for House Appropriations, we hope you will continue to show solid support for transforming child care by rejecting the Governor's reallocation proposal.

A promise was made to Vermonters when the legislature passed Act 76 - the landmark bill in 2023 to fix our broken child care system. The truth is, we have made measurable progress but we're not there yet.

Across Vermont, thousands of families are still struggling to find child care, costs are still too high, and child care deserts remain. This matters because child care is essential to our workforce and for preparing our youngest children for school.

Please urge the Appropriations Committee to reject the Governor's proposal to permanently reduce the base General Fund appropriation for child care by \$22.5 million. Our collective efforts to fix the child care system are just starting to work, and sustained commitment is absolutely necessary to make sure all Vermont families who need it have access to affordable child care.

This proposal from the Governor is different from the one you considered in the Budget Adjustment Act: in the FY26 budget the Governor is proposing to reduce the **base** General Fund appropriation for child care—his administration has said this clearly to the Appropriations Committee. We cannot let this happen—it risks undermining the progress underway from this committee's hard work to pass Act 76. We do not dispute the consensus projections, and we understand that the Legislature wisely made CCFAP an entitlement program so that eligible families will receive the benefits they're entitled to. But here is the choice: allow the funds that were raised for child care in Act 76 to be allocated for some unrelated purpose, or continue to take action on behalf of the many Vermont families who are still struggling to find and afford child care.

We know that you are balancing many needs and an unknown future in terms of federal funding. But until the impacts of federal decisions become more clear, we ask you to maintain the commitment to the full vision of Act 76.

Please recommend to the Appropriations Committee that they reject the Governor's proposal to reallocate funds away from child care.

Thank you.

Best,

Aly