



Date: February 19, 2026  
To: Chair Birong and members of the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs  
CC: Representative Rey Garofano & Senator Martine Larocque Gulick, Legislative reps. on the State Advisory Council  
From: Dora Levinson, Research and Data Director, Building Bright Futures  
Re: H. 67, Government Accountability, and BBF's Role to Monitor Act 76

---

Building Bright Futures (BBF) serves in statute as Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council and is named in Act 76 as the entity responsible for monitoring implementation and impact related to child care investments. Our role is to advise, convene partners, elevate the voices of families and professionals, and monitor whether policies are working as intended.

We appreciate the Committee's attention to strengthening government accountability. Based on our experience supporting monitoring and evaluation of large-scale policy implementation, including Act 76, we offer several considerations about what effective accountability looks like in practice.

Defining success is more complex than it may initially appear. When we began monitoring Act 76, partners across sectors identified more than 150 potential indicators that could reflect the law's impact. Narrowing that list to a meaningful, manageable set of measures required months of engagement, data analysis, and coordination across agencies. No single indicator, or even a small handful, can fully capture whether a policy is achieving its intended outcomes. Accountability systems are strongest when legislative intent is clearly articulated, measures are aligned to that intent, and there is sufficient analytical capacity to sustain monitoring over time.

Clarity of responsibility is also critical. For laws and investments with significant public impact, accountability works best when monitoring responsibilities are explicitly named and structurally supported. Clear designation of who is responsible for tracking implementation, analyzing data, and reporting findings helps avoid fragmentation, reduces duplication, and strengthens transparency. Objectivity, clear processes, and measures are essential to building public trust in oversight processes.

We have also learned that quantitative data alone is not sufficient. Families, providers, and professionals often surface implementation challenges before those challenges appear in formal metrics. Strong accountability systems intentionally incorporate qualitative information and lived experience alongside performance data. This blended approach improves interpretation, surfaces unintended consequences earlier, and supports continuous improvement. In small states like Vermont, it also importantly ensures that the experience of the most vulnerable children and families gets elevated.

Finally, accountability requires infrastructure. Data systems, cross-agency coordination, legislative staffing, and technical expertise all play a role in building a durable culture of evidence-informed decision-making. Without sustained capacity and clear processes, even well-designed oversight structures may struggle to function as intended.



We are encouraged to see the Legislature examining how best to strengthen government accountability practices. Thoughtful, well-supported accountability systems can help ensure that major public investments achieve their intended outcomes and that course corrections are made when needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these considerations.