

Dear Members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations,

My name is Alison Byrnes and I am an East Montpelier mom of three kids. My husband and I both work in Washington County. I am a high school teacher and he works supporting families through the Family Center.

I'm writing to express our concerns about the proposal to reallocate funding intended for child care.

The CCFAP expansion allowed us to afford care for all three of our kids. Prior to the expansion of CCFAP we were discussing me leaving the workforce as a teacher, we would have lost our healthcare and it would have negatively impacted my pension.

Before we qualified my mom was helping us pay for child care by pulling that money out of her retirement, which was very stressful and unfair.

We felt so much relief when Act 76 passed, so that my mom wouldn't have to use her retirement savings, and that I could continue teaching instead of leaving the workforce, especially at a time when teachers are so needed in Vermont. Our family joins the 1,900 others in Vermont that are seeing the benefit of these critical funds but without this continued investment this progress cannot be realized for all VT families.

Please protect child care funding and continue to invest in our children, our families, and our early childhood educators. We have just begun to see the positive impacts of this investment in Vermont for families, the workforce and communities.

We feel so grateful that our kids get to be at Turtle Island, a child care program here in Montpelier, being outside in nature, and being in a loving and nurturing environment. Thank you for keeping your promise to fund child care in Vermont and continuing the progress we have made. Thank you for your commitment to listening to your communities and fully funding the child care law.

Sincerely,  
Alison and David

Alison Byrnes and David Hershey  
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