

H.171 HIGHLIGHTS

What You Need to Know About Vermont's Child Care Bill

This session, with the tri-partisan passage of H.171 (the child care bill), Vermont set the stage for true child care reform. This bill lays the foundation for the accessible, affordable, high-quality, equitable system our families and businesses need in the future. It also makes \$12.7 million in investments now to stabilize Vermont's early childhood education system.

The bill charts a course for the future system by:

- » **Describing goals** for the state that a family will spend no more than 10% of their annual income on child care and that Vermont's early childhood educators will be fairly compensated and well supported;
- » **Prioritizing stakeholder input** to ensure that voices of those most impacted are informing the state's work to administer the child care system and allocate federal COVID response funds for child care; and
- » **Engaging experts to analyze** Vermont's current system and identify a stable, long-term funding source for a transformed child care system.

Because of your work, H.171 includes funding to support:

- » **Family Affordability:** \$5.5 million to continue the transformation of Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program. This funding will expand eligibility to more families, reduce family co-pays, and increase reimbursements paid to child care programs. **This means many Vermont families will pay less out of pocket for child care, more families will be eligible for child care support, and programs will receive higher reimbursements for their essential work.**
- » **Workforce Stabilization:** \$2.5 million to stabilize and strengthen our early childhood education workforce through scholarships and a student loan repayment support program. **This means current early childhood educators will be supported to keep doing what they love, and prospective early childhood educators will have access to resources to help them enter the field.**
- » **Infrastructure Improvement:** \$4.5 million to upgrade the failing IT system used to administer Vermont's early childhood education system. **This will make things easier for programs, early childhood educators, and families, and is critical to the future health of our child care system.**
- » **Systems Analysis:** \$200,000 to study the way Vermont's child care system works, and to develop recommendations on how to strengthen and streamline the way we administer and structure the system in the future.



"I'm not just a teacher; I'm a parent to a 4-year-old as well. My family is fortunate to have a safe place where our daughter can thrive and develop.

With the passage of H.171, we begin to forge a path toward ensuring ALL Vermont children and families have access to the same opportunity."

RACHEL WHALEN
Kindergarten Teacher
Union Elementary School, Montpelier

Because of you, H.171 takes a crucial step toward achieving the early childhood education system Vermonters need and deserve. We have an opportunity to solve Vermont's child care crisis, but it is still up to us to make sure our elected officials follow through on making the long-term public investment needed to transform our child care system. When we're successful, **Vermont will truly be the best place to live, work, and play.**