

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS ARE ESSENTIAL

To Vermont's children, families, economy, and recovery. Now more than ever.

H.171 lays the foundation for Vermont's future child care system by advancing legislation that:

- » **Describes** goals for the state that families 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.
- » **Continues** the transformation of Vermont's Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) to expand eligibility to more families, reduce family co-pays, and increase reimbursements paid to child care programs.
- » **Strengthens** our early childhood education workforce by increasing investment in existing scholarships for current early childhood educators and creating a new scholarship program and student loan repayment support program for new early childhood educators.
- » **Upgrades** the failing IT system used to administer Vermont's early childhood education system.
- » **Analyzes** the early childhood education system in Vermont and develops recommendations on how to strengthen and streamline governance, administration, and accountability structures and resources.
- » **Creates** systems to ensure that voices of those most impacted by the system are informing the state's work to administer the child care system and allocate federal COVID response funds for child care.
- » **Charges** experts with identifying a stable, long-term funding source for a transformed child care system.



H.171 passed the House on a vote of 146 - 1 and passed Senate Health and Welfare this week on a 5 - 0 vote.



Questions about this document? Please contact:

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Even before the pandemic, research indicated that Vermont would need at least 2,000 additional early childhood educators to meet the demand for child care. **H.171 invests in rapidly growing and retaining Vermont's early childhood education workforce through scholarships and student loan repayment support.**

H.171 takes important steps to achieve the goal of sufficient state support for child care programs so that every child in Vermont is taught by an early childhood educator who is compensated on par with their colleagues in similar fields, such as public education.

H.171 also makes immediate investments to grow and sustain the professional pipeline of early educators:

- » **\$400,000 to create a scholarship program** for students pursuing associates or bachelors' degrees in early childhood education at Vermont colleges and universities. Students would receive financial assistance for up to the full amount of tuition for every year they commit to working in a regulated child care program in Vermont.
- » **\$300,000 to fully fund existing scholarships** for current early childhood educators who are working in regulated child care programs in Vermont while acquiring credits in early childhood development or related work with young children.
- » **\$1,800,000 to fund a student loan repayment assistance program** for early childhood educators working in regulated, privately-operated child care programs who have earned an associates or bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related fields within the preceding five years. Eligible participants could receive up to \$4,000 a year if they commit to continuing to work in a regulated child care program for another year.



"I have lost many qualified teachers to other professions, including the public school system, not because they wanted to leave, but because they simply couldn't afford to stay. We must increase the compensation of our early educators and expand scholarship and loan repayment programs to help incentivize and support the next generation of early educators."

TRISHA SCHARF
Owner of Children Unlimited, Williston