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67th Legislature

1	BILL NO
2	
3	(Primary Sponsor)
4	A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE
5	SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."
6	
7	WHEREAS, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana recently
8	conducted a survey to examine the adequacy of child care in Montana and found significant economic impacts
9	for Montana parents, employers, and taxpayers; and
10	WHEREAS, of the 404 households that responded, 57% reported that finding affordable child care is a
11	challenge, 46% reported leaving work in the previous month due to inadequate child care, and 44% of
12	respondents missed a full day of work in the previous month due to inadequate child care; and
13	WHEREAS, other impacts of inadequate child care included survey respondents who declined to
14	pursue further education or training, turned down a promotion or a job offer, reduced work hours from full- to
15	part-time, and had been demoted, transferred to a less desirable position, or fired; and
16	WHEREAS, the economic impact for households earning \$30,000 or less annually was approximately
17	\$3,400, more than 10%, in lost wages; and
18	WHEREAS, the overall average economic impact in 2019 to the Montana economy included a \$5,700
19	loss to households, a \$2,150 loss to businesses, and a \$1,260 loss to taxpayers; and
20	WHEREAS, the overall total economic impact in 2019 that inadequate child care had on the state's
21	economy included a loss of \$145,146,000 to Montana households, \$54,562,000 to Montana businesses, and
22	\$32,036,000 to Montana taxpayers; and
23	WHEREAS the aggregated 10-year burden on the Montana economy due to inadequate child care is
24	forecasted to be a cost of \$572 million to households, \$207 million to businesses, and \$128 million to
25	taxpayers, for a total aggregated 10-year burden of \$907 million from 2019 to 2028.
26	
27	BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:
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1	NEW SECTION. Section 1. Best beginnings child care scholarship program. There is a best
2	beginnings child care scholarship program administered by the department of public health and human
3	services. The program is established to provide scholarships to qualified low-income families whose child
4	receives care provided by a licensed child-care provider. Each family shall participate in the cost of that child
5	care by making a copayment based on a sliding fee scale.
6	
7	NEW SECTION. Section 2. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
8	integral part of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7, and the provisions of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7, apply to [section 1].
9	
10	NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2021.
11	- END -

