

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 648
 2 INTRODUCED BY A. BUCKLEY, T. WELCH, G. NIKOLAKAKOS, G. FRAZER, E. BUTTREY, G. OBLANDER,
 3 M. YAKAWICH, S. FITZPATRICK, D. SALOMON, B. BARKER, K. ABBOTT, J. KASSMIER, J. KARLEN, S.
 4 HOWELL

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 6 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE
 7 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; SETTING THE INCOME ELIGIBILITY LEVEL AT ~~200%~~ 150% OF THE
 8 FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL; REQUIRING A MONTHLY COPAYMENT FROM AN ELIGIBLE FAMILY;
 9 PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AMENDING SECTION 52-2-713, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN
 10 EFFECTIVE DATE."

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 12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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 14 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Best beginnings child care scholarship program.** There is a best
 15 beginnings child care scholarship program administered by the department. The program is established to
 16 provide scholarships to qualified low-income families whose child received care provided by a licensed child
 17 care provider or day-care facility.

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 19 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Family income eligibility requirements.** In determining income
 20 eligibility for the best beginnings child care scholarship program, the department shall set a qualifying income
 21 threshold at no less than ~~200%~~ 150% of the federal poverty level for each family size.

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 23 NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Copayment requirements.** Each eligible family shall participate in the
 24 cost of child care by making a copayment. The department shall establish the following copayment amounts:

- 25 (1) for an eligible family with a qualifying income less than 100% of the federal poverty level, a
 26 copayment of \$10 for each eligible family for each month; and
- 27 (2) for an eligible family with a qualifying income of 100% of the federal poverty level or more, a
 28 copayment based on a sliding fee scale not to exceed 7% of an eligible family's monthly income.

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Section 4. Section 52-2-713, MCA, is amended to read:

"52-2-713. Payments for eligible children. The department shall pay a rate ~~established by the~~
~~department and appropriated by the legislature~~ based on a child's enrollment and set at the child's monthly
authorized amount to a day-care facility licensed or registered by the department for each child receiving day-
care service and certified eligible by the department to receive day-care services."

NEW SECTION. **Section 5. Appropriation.** There is appropriated \$10 million from the general fund
to the department of public health and human services in each year of the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, for
the purposes of [sections 1 through 4].

NEW SECTION. **Section 6. Codification instruction.** [Sections 1 through 3] are intended to be
codified as an integral part of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7, and the provisions of Title 52, chapter 2, part 7, apply
to [sections 1 through 3].

NEW SECTION. **Section 7. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2023.

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