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HOWELL

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

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

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

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

NEW SECTION. Section 3. Copayment requirements. Each eligible family shall participate in the
cost of child care by making a copayment. The department shall establish the following copayment amounts:
(1) for an eligible family with a qualifying income less than 100% of the federal poverty level, a
copayment of $10 for each eligible family for each month; and
(2) for an eligible family with a qualifying income of 100% of the federal poverty level or more, a
copayment based on a sliding fee scale not to exceed 7% of an eligible family’s monthly income.
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.