

January 23, 2023

Public Comment for House Bill 2 – Health & Human Services

Childcare Funding

- “Rural Montana needs safe and reliable childcare. Right now, the way it is, many working families have to put faith in leaving their children with unlicensed day care providers without background checks. As a professional in our community, I have witnessed situations in which child predators/abusers, easily establish themselves as childcare providers. Children suffer.

Quality, affordable childcare is essential for our economy and for more families the cost out of reach if they can find it. Not only do we have an affordability crisis, we have an availability crisis.”

-Daisy Carlsmith

- “My thanks to Representative Caferro for sponsoring this bill. Childcare is a necessary component for employment for our young families in the work force. We as a society have a responsibility to make it available and affordable. Please support this component of HB2. Thank you for your consideration and service.”

-Mindy Ferrell

- “Childcare from qualified personnel are essential to keeping our economy full-staffed with working parents. Wages for one parent are not sufficient to support a family with children, as we’ve observed with our own grandchild. Financial assistance with pre-school programs will assure that families can not only earn enough to provide for their children but will keep our economy vigorous and healthy.”

-Betsy Scanlin

- “Every Montanan deserves the opportunity to get quality, affordable childcare.

It is essential for our economy; it is essential for Montana workers to have the freedom to go to work knowing their children are safe.

For many families the cost is out of reach if they can find childcare at all. Not only do we have an affordability crisis, we have an availability crisis.

Affordable childcare is essential to keeping our Montana parents employed.”

-Kathryn Kern

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- “I am commenting on the funding for childcare. We have a crisis in Montana of affordability and availability of childcare. This affects the more vulnerable of our population most. In addition, money spent on early childhood welfare has tremendous return when those children grow up - less poverty, more educated, and higher incomes (adds to tax base and productivity), thus decreasing the chance that these children will become adults that need state services. Quality, affordable, accessible childcare is essential for our economy and for Montana families.”

-Walter Rowntree

- “Montana has the opportunity to support expanding childcare opportunities where there is critical need for available, affordable, quality care. We can create incentives for educating child care workers, help fund facilities and equipment, and supplement community efforts to development of local care centers.. Investing in childcare is a sure-fire boost to the productivity of our working families and benefits the emotional and mental health of the whole community.”

-Margarita McLarty

Medicaid Eligibility Rules

- “I support funding for Tribal Communities and Members.

With this change, the DPHHS and the Governor have made it easier to kick people off their health care by changing the Medicaid eligibility rules, which will disproportionately affect Tribal health care services

The DPHHS needs to restore continuous eligibility and moving forward, DPHHS needs to go about redetermining eligibility requirements in a slower and more responsible way

Their current plan for changing eligibility is irresponsible – and could kick 43,000 Montanans off their health care.”

-Daisy Carlsmith