



FEDERAL HILL HOUSE

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May 9, 2024

To: RI State House of Representatives - Finance Committee  
From: Staff and Leadership of Federal Hill House  
RE: Support for the Child Care for Child Care Educators Act (H-7123)

**We are writing today in strong support of the Child Care for Child Care Educators Act (H-7123) on behalf of Federal Hill House, an organization whose mission is to help our neighbors in Federal Hill, Olneyville, and the surrounding community thrive, at every stage of life.** Families need access to affordable, high-quality child care, so parents can work and children can grow, learn, and thrive. However, with high rates of staff turnover, essential relationships between children and educators are disrupted and the quality of care is therefore greatly diminished.

For many years Federal Hill House has operated an Early Learning Center (childcare) that now has six classrooms and a capacity of up to 70 children ages six weeks through five years. We offer a 50% discount to help retain staff and provide them with more affordable child care. However, this is a huge burden on our budget, which is running on a deficit already due to lack of state funding and the conclusion of COVID-19 childcare relief funding. At any given time in the past five years, we have had an average of five staff members with children in our Early Learning Center or School Age Child Care.

For child care educators with children of their own, it can be a significant struggle to cover the costs of high-quality child care on their base educator salary. Our staff have responded very positively to the program, and some have said they would not be able to work and afford child care if not for the discount we provide. This bill would make permanent the funding for child care educators and staff who work at least 20 hours a week in licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes - with no copayments and no income requirements or limitations. This would relieve child care workers of a massive financial burden while also providing them the comfort of knowing their child is receiving quality care while they are at work.

The need for high-quality child care is dire for your constituents and the people of Rhode Island as a whole. This bill will lift a weight off the shoulders for educators within our organization, your district, and around the entire state. It is a small but important step in the right direction. Thank you for your time and attention. We are happy to speak further with anyone who is interested and can be reached at 401-421-4722 or [kfernandez@federalhillhouse.org](mailto:kfernandez@federalhillhouse.org).

Sincerely,

  
Kimberly Fernandez  
Executive Director

  
Pamela Romero  
Early Learning Center Education Director



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Christina Loureiro

*Christina Loureiro*

Early Learning Center Program Coordinator, beneficiary of Child Care for Child Care Educators program

Gaby Gaytan

*Gaby Gaytan*

Early Learning Educator, beneficiary of Child Care for Child Care Educators program



Gaby's son Liam, and Christina's twin daughters Scarlet and Siena in our Early Learning Center's Infant Room!