

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am writing you to ask that you amend HB185 to conform with Senate Bill 359 through as it was amended in this committee.

When my daughter Violet was born, she weighed less than 4 lbs and began an uphill battle to gain weight and eat. Ultimately at three months old she required a feeding tube to get the calories and nutrition needed for healthy development. Since my husband and I must both work full time, I was deeply concerned about how we would find appropriate and affordable childcare for a young infant with complex medical needs. It is challenging to find nannies knowledgeable and comfortable with the realities of tube feeding and most centers we spoke with were not quite confident they could provide the support we needed. KFICCC, through their excellent nursing staff, instantly put our concerns at ease and offered a safe place for Violet to grow. They were quite literally the only center equipped to care for Violet and the support they offer, with funds from the Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program, allowed my family the stability we desperately needed. Violet, still with her feeding tube, is a vibrant and healthy toddler today because of the nursing resources KFICCC provides.

The Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program has been in place throughout the state, with 7 regional providers as grant recipients serving 250 children with specialized healthcare needs. The program allows parents to work, knowing that their children are receiving the nursing and early intervention services they need to stay healthy and build skills.

The grant program has been level funded at 3.7 million per year for many years. We were surprised to see the FY26 draft budget cut this appropriation to 1.5 million. We are working to try to get the additional 2.2 million needed restored through our budget committees or a Supplemental Budget.

We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Best,
Emma Fredieu
KFICCC parent