

SENATE BILL NO. 311

INTRODUCED BY S. O'BRIEN

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana recently conducted a survey to examine the adequacy of child care in Montana and found significant economic impacts for Montana parents, employers, and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, of the 404 households that responded, 57% reported that finding affordable child care is a challenge, 46% reported leaving work in the previous month due to inadequate child care, and 44% of respondents missed a full day of work in the previous month due to inadequate child care; and

WHEREAS, other impacts of inadequate child care included survey respondents who declined to pursue further education or training, turned down a promotion or a job offer, reduced work hours from full- to part-time, and had been demoted, transferred to a less desirable position, or fired; and

WHEREAS, the economic impact for households earning \$30,000 or less annually was approximately \$3,400, more than 10%, in lost wages; and

WHEREAS, the overall average economic impact in 2019 to the Montana economy included a \$5,700 loss to households, a \$2,150 loss to businesses, and a \$1,260 loss to taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the overall total economic impact in 2019 that inadequate child care had on the state's economy included a loss of \$145,146,000 to Montana households, \$54,562,000 to Montana businesses, and \$32,036,000 to Montana taxpayers; and

WHEREAS the aggregated 10-year burden on the Montana economy due to inadequate child care is forecasted to be a cost of \$572 million to households, \$207 million to businesses, and \$128 million to taxpayers, for a total aggregated 10-year burden of \$907 million from 2019 to 2028.

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

