

Sen. Agard: Republican JFC members removed Child Care Counts from state budget

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MADISON – Early Friday morning, the Joint Finance Committee approved \$0 for the Child Care Counts program. Governor Evers’ budget proposal included \$340 million to provide a permanent investment in the Child Care Counts Program, a program created with federal dollars during the pandemic to support Wisconsin’s early care and education community. To date, the program helped over 4,900 providers in Wisconsin to stay open, recruit and retain qualified staff, and provide care to over 113,000 children statewide.

Senate Democratic Leader Melissa Agard (D-Madison) released the following statement:

“One of the hardest things I’ve ever had to do was find quality, affordable childcare for each of my four boys so that I could go back to work after they were born. This is the case for far too many families across Wisconsin.

“Put simply, if parents do not have child care, they cannot go to work. If our kids don’t have safe quality childcare they won’t thrive. If Republicans were serious about addressing our state’s current workforce needs, they would ensure that every parent and every child has access to quality child care regardless of their zip code.

“When we invest in our kids, we invest in Wisconsin’s future. I have heard from numerous child care providers, parents, and businesses, both in the 16th Senate district and across our state, expressing the need for the continuation of the Child Care Counts program. We know that access to affordable, quality childcare is critical for the well-being of working families, and it is imperative that child care providers

are supported and provided with the resources necessary to grow the future of Wisconsin.”