

From: [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
To: [Tristan Walsh](#)
Subject: FW: childcare funds
Date: Monday, March 14, 2022 1:19:17 PM

fyi

From: Kathleen Hansen <khansen@reachak.org>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 1:14 PM
To: Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>
Subject: childcare funds

Hi Rep Fields-

I understand you have an interest in supporting the childcare field. I'd like to share an additional thought regarding childcare funds.

As a provider of early intervention Part C services to birth to three year olds, I often see families and childcares need additional support for supporting children who experience delays in their development. Currently, additional funds for these children are through the Alaska Inclusive Child Care Program (Alaska IN!) program funded by the childcare assistance office. A family who has a child with a developmental delay must qualify for childcare assistance before they can access additional funds for individuals with developmental disabilities. Children experience disabilities regardless of income level and families who have children with disabilities struggle with finding childcares for their children. Uncoupling the Alaska IN! program from childcare assistance would greatly benefit families and childcare providers who provide services to individuals with disabilities.

This is a great opportunity to fund Alaska IN! with additional windfall of childcare and ARPA funds so that ALL Alaskans who experience developmental delays can have access to these funds, childcare providers can be supported and caregivers can continue to work.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kathleen Hansen, OTD, OTR/L, IMH-E® III
Infant Learning Program (ILP) Director
Occupational Therapist



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Juneau, AK 99801
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From: [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
To: [Tristan Walsh](#)
Subject: Fwd: I support HB 149 and a Child Care Trust Fund
Date: Thursday, March 17, 2022 7:25:22 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Heidi Weiland <contact@heidijandel.com>
Date: March 17, 2022 at 6:27:42 PM AKDT
To: "Rep. Zack Fields" <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>
Subject: I support HB 149 and a Child Care Trust Fund

Hi Zack,

This email is to register my support for HB 149 and a Child Care Trust Fund. Child care should not be a barrier for those who want to work, especially for women and working class folks. Accessible, quality child care is a key to improving gender equity.

Thank you for promoting this cause.

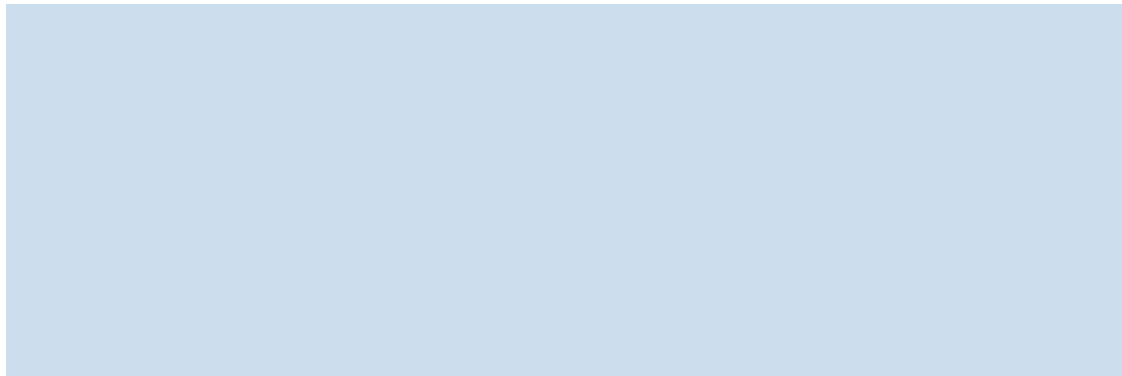
Kind regards,

.....
Heidi Jandel Weiland (she/her)
Vibrant Living: Holistic Life Coaching

[Website](#) | (202) 810-9583

[Sign up for my newsletter](#) on building more self-confidence and creating a life that you love.

On Thu, Mar 17, 2022 at 4:45 PM Rep. Zack Fields <rep.zack.fields@akleg.gov> wrote:





Constituent Coffee and Other Updates

March 17, 2022

Dear Neighbor,



Please join me and my staff this Sunday at 8:30am for a constituent coffee at New Sagaya. We look forward to seeing you in person to talk about legislative session and neighborhood concerns.

Campaign Finance Reform Passes House:
The House Majority Coalition developed and passed campaign finance

reform legislation this week that will bring back campaign contribution limits after those limits

□ were eliminated by political appointees on APOC. I offered a successful amendment to limit outside contribution to no more than 25% of a candidates total campaign contributions.

Violence Against Women:

The Tribal Affairs Committee of which I am a member is advancing legislation to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women crisis. Yesterday, President Biden signed reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, and Senator Murkowski and Congressman Don Young included language in that bill empowering Alaska tribes to crack down on perpetrators of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Child Care Bill in House Finance:

The House Finance Committee is considering HB 149, a bill of mine to strengthen the child care sector. I'm working with child care advocates like thread, Alaskans for the Education of Young Children, and Growing Alaska Leaders on an amendment (which Rep. Josephson will offer) to authorize a child care trust fund, and an endowment that would provide a sustainable ongoing funding stream to expand the supply of childcare and make prices more affordable for parents. If you share my belief we must act to strengthen the child care sector, send me an email supporting HB 149 and a Child Care Trust Fund and we'll include it in the public record.

Op-Eds:

I recently published op-eds on public safety and protecting state sovereignty related to digital commerce.

Russia:

The House Labor & Commerce Committee is drafting four bills to ensure that Russia is not profiting off of Alaska investments. We will introduce the bills and hear them in committee soon.

Survey Results:

Thanks to everyone who responded to our revenue survey:

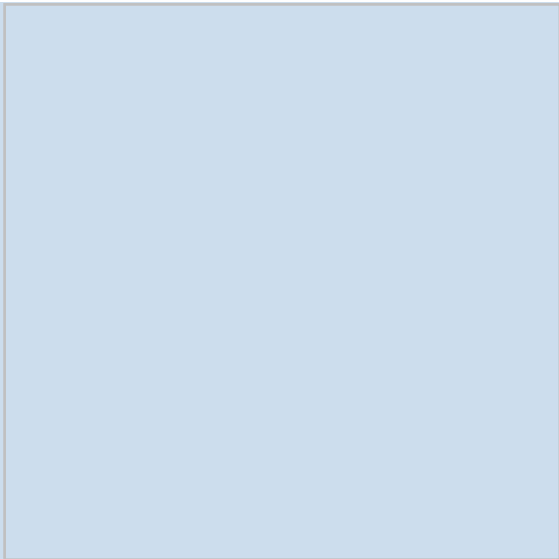


Hope to see you this weekend,
Zack



Cast Your Ballot:

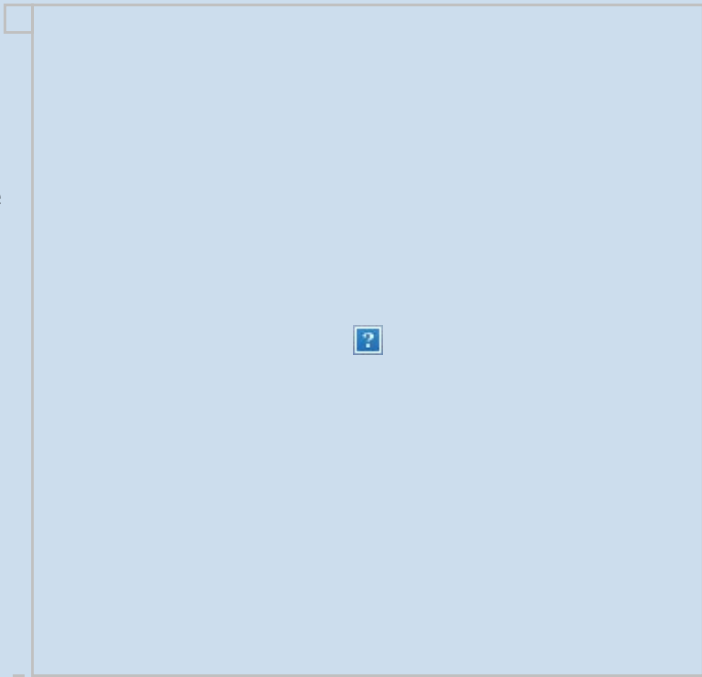
☐ Election Day is Tuesday, April 5th. The last day to register to vote is Sunday March 6, which is 30 days before the Municipal election. Ballot packages will be mailed to voters by March 15, 2022. Temporary mailing address applications must be received by March 29, 2022. Ballots must be postmarked no later than Election Day, April 5th. You can now track your ballot via text or email updates. Visit the Municipality of Anchorage Election page for more





information!

Weigh in on Infrastructure Funding:




Here's another chance for you to weigh in on building resilient transportation infrastructure in Alaska through the Infrastructure Bill. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has launched an infrastructure survey to hear from Alaskans. You can complete the survey [here](#).



Vaccinate Alaska:



Follow us on social media:



Representative Zack Fields
907.465.2647
rep.zack.fields@akleg.gov

Representative Zack Fields | 120 4th St, Juneau, AK 99801

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Sent by rep.zack.fields@akleg.gov powered by



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To Whom it may concern:

My name is Jessica Doril and I have been working in Early Childhood settings for 21 years. I began my career in Petersburg which is located in SE Alaska. I had no official training and didn't even know what Early Childhood was at the time. What I did have were extremely devoted mentors. I had no idea 21 years ago what resources were available to me, however, since then I have lived and worked in several states, obtained my AA in Early Childhood, clocked in thousands of training hours, and taught internationally. I have been a presenter at conferences, joined many professional organizations, been on several advisory boards and myself have become a mentor. I did so as a single mother with young children. I graduated with honors and have since been a strong advocate for children and teachers. None of that was an easy task. I am now back in Alaska exactly where I started. I have, for several years, been looking for a program that offered a Bachelors in Early Childhood. Most schools wanted me to change my focus but I have been in a classroom and worked as an administrator and I needed a degree that allowed me to continue with the work I have been doing for all of these years. That lack has recently been filled with the new program at University of Anchorage Alaska.

What early childcare professionals in Alaska require are opportunities to meet our needs. The work of Early Childhood Professionals has been proven through research to be the most important work during essential and critical years of brain development. We owe it to our children and our state to give them the best we have to offer. We can only do that when the Early Childhood field is supported in the work that we do. This field is notoriously underpaid and undervalued. We are often referred to as glorified babysitters, but what I do to help every child in my care reach their highest potential is far greater than that. I offer the challenge to anyone who says differently to come into my classroom and accomplish the many developmentally appropriate practices that I manage within the hours and pay of which I am asked to do it in. When our caregivers are not paid a livable wage, they too often have to find new jobs in order to support their own families. We are consistently losing our most qualified staff to other jobs. This is at a detriment to our children and also to the elementary schools where these young children soon filter into starting in kindergarten.

What our families and communities need are educated and qualified teachers who are working in high quality programs. Our state is unlike any other that I have lived and worked in. We have more resources and money available than many others. It's now time to take a closer look and where we should be funding our state. Early Childhood is the place and now is the time. Our state has a ranking of 18th of the fifty states for economic outlook but we come in at only 49th for our education. This shows that we have the means, we just need to look more intentionally at our school system, including our Early Childhood programs and find ways to support the facilities that are already in place. Getting substantial sustainable funding through the state not only means that childcare doors will not have to close, but also means that the children and staff are supported in necessary ways. A childcare trust fund ensures success for our state. It means that parents will be able to continue to work and our economy can thrive. Childcare is a critical part of everyday life. We must find ways to adapt and support those most in need.

Early childcare professionals need access to be able to further our education and develop our skills from reliable and credible sources through the state of Alaska. What we do, not only

directly impacts children in our care and their families, but also the schools that these children will filter into. Building quality programs that allow staff to further their education, produce greater outcomes, and make a livable wage needs subsistence funding from a bill like HB 149. We need support at a greater state level from a childcare trust fund like the amendment to HB 149.

Alaska is a large state and I live in a small, rural community. We don't have the advantages of larger areas in the state, but the children of my community deserve to have professionals who are educated, and able to meet their individual needs. I believe that HB 149 will allow childcare professionals to make a wage that will compensate them for their hard work that they give everyday to children in our care. I believe that HB 149 will greatly impact the quality of education of children in their early years.

I Support HB 149

Thank you,

Jessica Doril
Preschool teacher at Petersburg Children's Center
Petersburg, Alaska

From: [Geoffrey & Camie Gillen](#)
To: [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
Subject: In Support of HB 149
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:03:49 PM

Good afternoon,

We are writing in regards to support HB 149 for an Act relating to Allow child day care providers to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining.

Child care is the most important aspect of our lives. They are with our children more hours in the day than us as parents. These hard working providers teach, love, care for, and keep our kids safe. They are underpaid, underappreciated, and usually, not enough funds to provide the best possible care or maintain their own facilities. The wages for staff are not even livable, let alone childcare rates are too expensive for the average working family.

Any avenues the State can take to help support our providers has our support.

Thank you for this opportunity to possibly help.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey & Camie Gillen

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Sharlay Mamoe. I am the executive director of the Petersburg Children's Center (PCC) in Petersburg Alaska. I am writing in support of HB 149 and the amendment to create a childcare trust fund. I am representing myself as an employee of the childcare industry in Alaska. Prior to my start of being a childcare employee I was a mother and board member for the Petersburg Children's Center. Ever since I started my involvement with PCC back in 2015 I wanted a better working wage for the staff. I wanted the people who took care of my precious baby girl to get benefits, such as health care and retirement packages and a better wage then they were being offered. I knew and still do that it is a very demanding career that is often not seen as a profession, but more of a job. Most people do not see it as being very important, although research shows that there are more synapses being created in the first three years of a person's life than any other time in their life. A good early childhood foundation will allow a child to have better outcomes in academics and their social life, it is better for the economy and it is generally just a good thing to do.

I am writing to you today because I have always wanted more for the people who took care of my daughter when she first started in childcare back in 2015. I was always willing to fund anything I could because to me her caregivers were extended family members. I trusted them then and I trust them now with one of the three most important things in my life, my children. A caregiver is the second most important profession in the world, only second to that of being a parent. We need to better support the people who whole heartedly take great care of our children. We need to stop looking at them as someone who will "watch" my child so I can work, and we need to treat them as the professionals that they are!

I believe that this bill, HB 149 will allow the industry to be given the chance to be seen as professionals. I believe that it will give us the voice that we so desperately need to ensure our future, our children, are well taken care of and will have a fighting chance to have qualified people to care for them while their guardians are at work. I think it is about time that the caregivers that are caring for our most vulnerable are given a wage that truly compensates them for the wonderful yet difficult work that they put into their work every day! Childcare industry workers have been overlooked for too long and it is time that this industry sees a sustainable subsidy from their government, because it is the right thing to do.

Thank you for allowing me to articulate my thoughts, I hope you will see the need for the childcare industry to be seen as professionals and will pass HB 149 to allow that to happen for us.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharlay Mamoe". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Sharlay" and last name "Mamoe" clearly legible.

Sharlay Mamoe

Executive Director
Petersburg Children's Center

From: [Denise Gubernick](#)
To: [Rep. Zack Fields](#)
Subject: HB149
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 5:51:01 PM

Hello. My name is Denise Gubernick. I am a childcare provider at Petersburg children's center in the nursery, taking care of the tiniest ones getting them ready to go out into the world. I feel my job is very, very important! I am not just a babysitter! I send out young souls into the world knowing how to be gentle, kind and with the love of books. I love my job, I'm very good at it, and I certainly believe that I deserve to be paid more than I am at 12.25 an hour. I'm a mother with three children, a grandmother of three, and I have years of extensive experience in the childcare industry. I Believe that the providers of loving care to the children of our future deserve to be compensated accordingly! Please vote yes on HB 149. Thank you for your time.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

March 17, 2022

To Representative Fields and Representative Josephson,

Child care is a vital sector in Alaska because it supports young children as well as all other sectors of the economy. Child care is in a fragile state and needs more public investment to ensure access to affordable, quality child care for all Alaskans. **thread** supports the creation of a Child Care Trust Fund and endorses HB149, collective bargaining of child care professionals.

thread, Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral organization, is a 35-year-old private nonprofit, working to increase access to affordable, quality child care. To ensure quality child care for Alaska, we must empower the voice of the early childhood workforce while ensuring a viable child care sector to support working families and a strong economy. The child care sector was in crisis prior to COVID-19, which unfortunately has worsened over the past two years. **More private and public investment is needed now to ensure the sector not only survives but thrives.**

Access is the supply of child care needed to support families with the care they want while actively pursuing their careers. In the 2020 Early Care and Learning Economic Impact Report <https://www.threadalaska.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Alaska-Early-Care-and-Learning-in-Alaska-Report.pdf>, families reported access to child care in order to go to work, school or training is getting more difficult. This has gotten worse during COVID as many programs are serving fewer children because they are following CDC mitigation guidelines which at times still requires multi-day closures.

Affordable child care is out of reach for too many families. In 2019, families were paying 17% of their household income on child care. For single parents, much more. The price for child care in 2020 was \$12,000 for infants and \$9,000 for preschool age children annually. For families with two children, paying for child care was the largest family expense, exceeding the cost of housing. Child care in Alaska costs more than college tuition at a time when parents are at the beginning of their careers. During COVID, there has been a shift in families leaving employment or having reduced hours making child care even more unaffordable.

Quality child care begins with licensed, regulated care. Licensed child care programs, many small businesses, were struggling before COVID and are now on the verge of collapse. Their operating costs have increased at the same time their revenue has decreased from fewer children in care. In December, 51% of child care programs reported concern about needing to close in the next 6-12 months. **thread** estimates that child care needs \$10M/month to survive COVID, which child care programs are still actively managing. In addition, while most child care programs across the state are open, they are unable to serve more children

due to a workforce shortage which is difficult to fill with high competition for workers, low wages and few benefit offerings.

The *Child care workforce* is made up of professionals whose pay does not reflect the value of their work, averaging \$12/hour with no benefits. COVID has put a huge strain on the child care workforce as they are caring for others while risking their own health. This critical workforce needs respect and the compensation it deserves. HB149 will engage the early childhood workforce in decision-making and how best to support the families and children they serve.

Child care is critical infrastructure for Alaska. It is a sector working to ensure all other sectors work yet it is underfunded and needs public investment. With more quality child care that is licensed and regulated, Alaska will gain stronger families and children. The demonstrated short-and long-term benefits for young children include stronger language development, higher high school graduation rates and increased long-term health. When more child care programs are following high quality standards, the result will be stronger workforce supports, increased family engagement and curriculum led instruction tailored to meet the individual cognitive and social emotional needs of children.

With reduced access to child care, we are experiencing slower economic growth and this impacts both our state's recovery from COVID and long-term growth. Last year, the State Chamber in partnership with **thread** conducted a US Chamber of Commerce Foundation family survey to better understand the intersection of business and child care. The study found that Alaska has an untapped potential in meeting family child care needs resulting in \$165M loss to our economy.

https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/sites/default/files/EarlyEd_ALASKA_2021_DIGITAL.pdf It's time to start treating child care as a vital part of our economic growth. This is an opportunity to invest in the affordable, quality child care needed in our state.

thread sees great potential for more public investment to strengthen and support child care that will benefit all of Alaska. Now is the time for change. **thread** supports a Child Care Trust Fund and HB149 which will address many of the sector's challenges with a long-term view. Early childhood is a period of great opportunity to help shape a child's view and interaction with the world. It's time to show our young children they are worth our investment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Stephanie Berglund'.

Stephanie Berglund

thread CEO

(907) 265-3101, sberglund@threadalaska.org