



June 12, 2020

Senator Kerry Donovan
State Capitol Building
200 E. Colfax Avenue #339
Denver, CO 80203

RE: HB20-1053 Support for Early Childhood Educator Workforce

Dear Senator Donovan:

We thank you for your support. As we communicated back in February, our town as well as our Kids First organization recognizes a serious shortage of childcare spaces for working families, specifically infant care. In 2018, 137 babies were born to families that live in Pitkin County, and we have 32 licensed infant spaces. We are seeing parents not returning to jobs, delaying their return to work, and in some cases leaving the community because they cannot find childcare.

We are actively searching for physical space to create childcare capacity; however, we are also actively recruiting early childhood workforce. This is challenging with the existing childcare programs given the cost of living in our valley. This bill now before the Governor will be beneficial for people to earn qualifications, receive coaching, and possibly be part of an apprenticeship program. We know that investing early in young children earns a high return on investment for our state and our community.

The City of Aspen and Kids First is pleased to work in collaboration with our Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council, CMC, the Aspen School District, and the Office of Early Childhood to align this new program. This legislation is a great way to ensure a high-quality early childhood workforce for all children across the state.

Thank you so much for your thoughtful work on so many issues that affect our community. It means a great deal to know that we can reach out to you, that you listen to our thoughts, and that you understand the needs across this region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ward Hauenstein".

Ward Hauenstein, MAYOR PRO-TEM

Torre, MAYOR, Skippy Mesirow, Ann Mullins, Rachael Richards, CITY COUNCIL