



new hampshire
WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

To: Chair Birdsell and members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of SB 237, relative to the child care scholarship program and making an appropriation therefor
Date: February 15, 2013
Position: OUGHT TO PASS

The New Hampshire Women’s Foundation invests in equality and opportunity for New Hampshire women and girls through grantmaking, research, education, and advocacy.

We support SB 237 because affordable and accessible child care is essential for a functioning economy and because women are the most impacted by the child care industry – both as the providers and as those who rely on its service.

Women make the economy work. But they need child care.

Women Left the Workforce Due to Child Care Issues

Nationally, women’s labor force participation is 1% lower than it was pre-pandemic, representing an estimated one million women missing from the labor force.¹ During the pandemic, mothers with young children arranged reductions in their work hours that are four to five times greater than the reductions arranged by fathers.² And without access to reliable child care, women leave the workforce. Women made up 53% of NH unemployment claims during the pandemic.³ Between April 2020 and December 2021,

WOMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Insurance Data, ETA 203, Characteristics of the Uninsured.

--- STATE OF EMERGENCY IN EFFECT IN NEW HAMPSHIRE



¹ Ferguson, Stephanie, and Isabella Lucy. U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2022, *Data Deep Dive: A Decline of Women in the Workforce*, <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/data-deep-dive-a-decline-of-women-in-the-workforce>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2023.

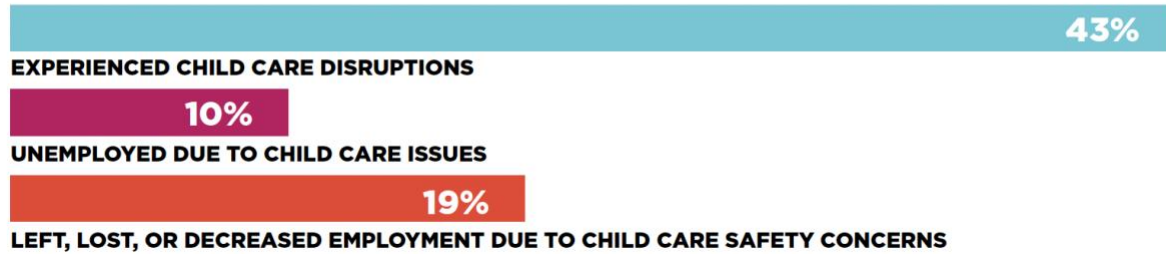
² Caitlyn Collins and others, “COVID-19 and the gender gap in work hours,” *Gender, Work and Organization* (2020): 1–12, available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/gwao.12506>.

³ BLS Unemployment Insurance Data, ETA 203, Characteristics of the Uninsured.

15% of Granite State workers who are out of the labor force cite child care as the primary reason for not working.⁴

CHILD CARE IMPLICATIONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, Weeks 40 - 42, Education Table 1.

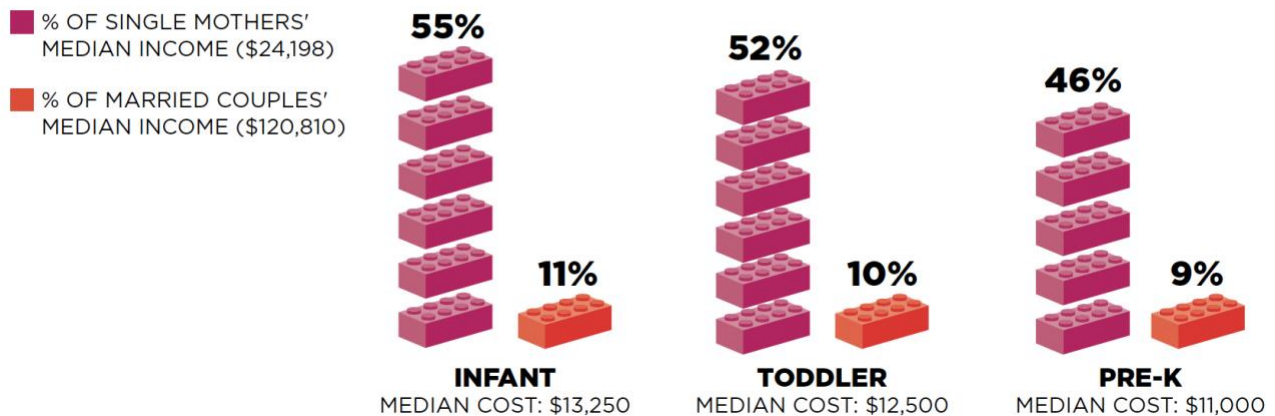


Child Care is Unaffordable

Child care is expensive and out of reach for many parents. The annual median cost for an infant in a New Hampshire child care center care is \$13,250, a cost that would consume 11% of the median income of a married couple, and a staggering **55% of a single mother's annual median income**.⁵ Working is simple not a viable option for many single mothers.

CHILD CARE AFFORDABILITY

New Hampshire Connections, 2021 New Hampshire Child Care Market Rate Final Report.
Median income listed below is for single mother/married couple with child under the age of 5 years old.



Women are Majority of Child Care Workforce

New Hampshire women work in greater numbers in essential workforce occupations (child care, social services, health care, teaching, and grocery), including **86% of the employees in the child care/social service industry**.⁶ The average salary of a childcare worker is \$24,490, less than half the average New Hampshire worker salary of \$59,270.⁷ The infrastructure that SB 237 creates to provide sign-on and longevity bonuses to child care workers would help to increase and retain this crucial workforce.

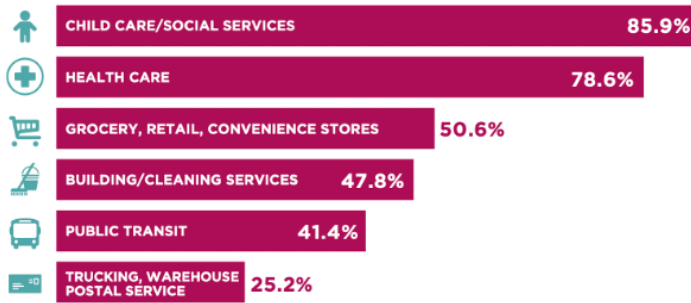
⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, Week 1-41.

⁵ New Hampshire Connects. (2021). New Hampshire Child Care Market Rate Final Report.

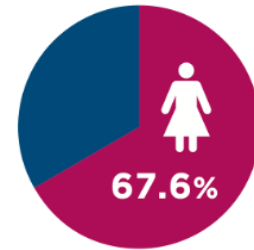
⁶ Center for Economic and Policy Research Analyzing ACS 2014-2018

⁷ New Hampshire Child Well-Being Data Hub, Early Learning, *Child Care Program Staff Salaries*, 2021, available at <https://nhchilddata.org>.

WOMEN AS PERCENTAGE OF ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE IN KEY OCCUPATIONAL SECTORS IN NH⁴



Source: Center for Economic and Policy Research Analyzing ACS 2014-2018



WOMEN COMPRISE MORE THAN 2/3 OF THE ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE

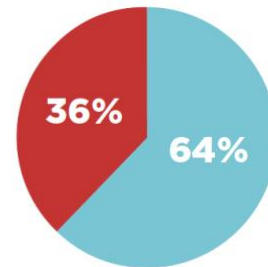
Grandparents as Child Care Providers

The child care crisis impacts women of all ages. Grandparents, particularly grandmothers, are also affected by lack of child care access and will often change work hours to accommodate child care responsibilities.^{8,9} From 2020–2021, older women saw a sizable decrease in their labor force participation, while men in the same age cohort had little change.¹⁰

GRANDPARENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR GRANDCHILD, BY GENDER

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2021 1-Year Estimates, Table B10056.

WOMEN
MEN



Conclusion

Women make the economy work — they are both the backbone of the child care industry and the backbone of the labor force who rely on access to reliable and affordable child care. SB 237 provides solutions to increase and retain the child care industry and make child care more affordable for many working families.

Therefore, we respectfully ask for your support of SB 237.

⁸ National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies. (2008). Grandparents: A Critical Child Care Safety Net.

⁹ Child Trends. (2004). Grandma and Grandpa Taking Care of the Kids: Patters of Involvement. Publication #2004-17.

¹⁰ Nielson, A. (2021). Reviving New Hampshire Workforce: 2021 Economic Analysis Report. New Hampshire Employment Security.