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Good Afternoon, my name is Claire Kendall, Co Director of the Family Center of Washington County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and thank you for your service on behalf of Vermonters.

I am asking for your support for the PCCN request to increase the base funding by \$1.5 million for a total of \$4.8 million in the PCC line in FY'23 budget & also for a second-year of one-time funding to address the needs of families with young children because of the COVID pandemic (\$3.7million).

Please fully fund the Parent Child Centers' essential work with families with young children. Our request for FY23 for PCC's is to increase the base funding by \$1.5 million for a total of \$4.8 million in the PCC line in FY23 budget & also for a second-year of one-time funding to address the needs of families with young children because of the COVID pandemic (\$3.7million). This appropriation is in S91 which is a very important part of the bill.

PCCs deliver critical & essential state services to families with young children, through Integrated Grants and contracts with DCF. PCCs are state partners and family resource hubs across the state that connect families to community and state services.

The impact of the pandemic on the mental health and well-being of families has been significant. The loss of connections due to child care disruptions and school interruptions and the loss of community based social interactions has resulted in increased isolation, anxiety, and depression throughout our communities.

PCCs used ARPA COVID relief dollars to provide families with immediate critical needs. Throughout COVID PCCs have made sure families we work with across the state have access to goods and services that address a family's needs, such as food, housing, clothing, health care, and child care. We have diaper banks that give out thousands of free diapers, wipes and formula, and food pantries providing food and other basic necessities to families.

Families are missing traditional face to face interactions and social support systems. **During the pandemic PCCs made it our mission to continue providing critical supports to parents and children. Parent Child Centers provide parents with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to care for their children, we work to strengthen families and the communities across Vermont.** PCCs are hubs for families with young children, an actual place in the local community where families are always welcome and can get the support they need, regardless of economic or family status. **Children do well when their parents do well.**

Prevention work saves money. PCC prevention programs and services ensure that parents have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to care for their children, we can strengthen families and the communities they live in.

PCCs do more with less and prevent expensive problems down the road. Every dollar invested in building healthy communities saves future tax payer dollars and reduces the demand on our health care system and helps to ensure that more people will be healthier for longer periods of their lives. PCCs are the answer to helping families get the crucial supports they need to build resiliency.

Healthy children and stable families result in strong and resilient communities across Vermont. PCCs build relationships with families before, during and after a crisis in their lives. Our multi-generational support is unique and has a proven track record.

Thank you again for your time today and for your dedication and service during these challenging times.

Claire Kendall

Co Executive Director