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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Lt. Governor Molly Gray and House Speaker Jill Krowinski Host Legislative Summit on Child Care and Paid Family Leave

Montpelier, Vt. — On December 8th, Vermont Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray and House Speaker Jill Krowinski hosted a summit of policymakers and advocates focused on working families, the caregiving economy, and universal access to paid family leave as well as child care in Vermont.

The Summit was held at the Vermont State House and consisted of two panels, one dedicated to understanding universal paid family and medical leave, and the other dedicated to understanding universal, affordable child care access. Lt. Governor Gray, House Speaker Krowinski, advocates, business leaders, and early childhood educators, all spoke about the need for Vermonters to have access to universal paid family and medical leave and universal, affordable child care.

“All Vermont workers should have the financial security to put their and their family’s health and safety first. Without universal paid family and medical leave and universal, affordable child care access, Vermonters will continue to be forced to choose between caring for loved ones, their own health and safety, and a paycheck. Today’s summit was about restarting the conversation on the basic needs of Vermonters and maintaining the stable workforce Vermont businesses need,” Lt. Governor Gray said.

65% of Vermonters don’t have access to paid family and medical leave and the US Census Bureau estimates that 72.8% of Vermont children under the age of 6 have all available parents in the labor force. Let’s Grow Kids estimates that 8,700 children in Vermont do not have access to the child care they need.

“The panel discussions around universal childcare and paid family and medical leave was inspiring and I am so excited to return to the State House in January and take on this important work. We heard stories of the plight of Vermonters trying to provide for themselves and their families, and having to sacrifice their health or leave their job because they didn’t have access to these programs. The discussion made clear that both of these programs are needed for Vermonters to be successful and that there are many employees and employers alike who are aligned in their support for this work. We will be diligent and thorough when we have these policy discussions this session,

but I know that we all agree that legislation is needed in order to support the health and well-being and economic security for all Vermonters,” House Speaker Krowinski said.

The event’s agenda and a full list of panelists can be found [here](#). A recording of the universal paid family and medical leave panel can be viewed [here](#). A recording of the universal, affordable child care access panel can be viewed [here](#).

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