

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 467

2 INTRODUCED BY J. GILLETTE

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4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE
5 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; AND PROVIDING DEMOGRAPHIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS."

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7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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9 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Best beginnings child care assistance program -- general**

10 **requirements.** (1) The department shall administer the best beginnings child care assistance program that
11 offers financial assistance to eligible parents to offset the cost of child care.

12 (2) Every 3 years, in each child care region and in the top nine counties receiving child care
13 assistance funds, the department shall set the maximum income level for program eligibility by conducting an
14 assessment utilizing an objective assessment tool. The assessment tool must consider regional variations in
15 cost of living and cost of child care.

16 (3) The department shall:

17 (a) establish a maximum income level for program eligibility that is specific to each child care
18 region and county referenced in subsection (2); and

19 (b) administer the program in compliance with Title 42, chapter 105, Subchapter II-B, of the United
20 States Code.

21 (4) If there is a waitlist for the best beginnings child care assistance program, the department may
22 utilize additional sources of funding to offer assistance to more applicants, including funds from:

23 (a) the state special account established in 53-6-1101;

24 (b) the child care and development fund, up to the ceiling permitted by the federal government;

25 (c) the temporary assistance to needy families program, up to the ceiling permitted by the federal
26 government; and

27 (d) the social services block grant, up to the ceiling permitted by the federal government.

28 (5) If a waitlist remains after the department uses additional funding pursuant to subsection (4), the

1 department shall prioritize those in the lowest income brackets.

2 (6) It is the intent of the legislature that this program be administered within existing levels of
3 funding.

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5 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
6 integral part of Title 53, chapter 4, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 4, apply to [section 1].

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