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Cost of child care skyrockets

Democrats propose plan to ease costs, expand economic opportunity

MADISON – Ensuring parents have access to affordable and quality childcare remains a top priority for Democrats as the 2017-18 legislative session gets underway. To help make child care more affordable for families, Sen. LaTonya Johnson (D-Milwaukee) and Rep. Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) are introducing legislation that would create a targeted child care income tax credit. This bill is supported by several Democratic leaders including Sen. Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse).

“As child care costs continue to rise and wages remain stagnant, working parents are struggling to make ends meet,” said Sen. Shilling. “With more dual-income households, modern families need workplace policies that will help ensure flexibility and enable businesses to be more competitive. A tax credit to make quality child care more affordable for Wisconsin families will help strengthen and expand our workforce.”

According to a report from Child Care Aware America, rising child care costs exceed the costs of housing, transportation and food for many families. At roughly \$1000 a month, the average cost of infant care is more per year than in-state tuition at one of Wisconsin’s public universities.

“Whether I’m at the school bus stop, gas station or the local grocery store, one of the biggest frustrations I hear from parents are rising child care costs,” added Shilling. “If we want families to succeed, we need to focus on policies that will boost our middle class and ensure working moms and dads have access to high quality, affordable child care.”

This proposal is part of a broad effort by Democrats to strengthen the middle class. Additional Democratic proposals seek to expand access to health care, student loan debt relief, and paid family and sick leave.

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