



January 20, 2024

The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr.
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
111 Gressette Bldg.
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Chairman Peeler and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of Trident United Way, which supports the communities of Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, we are urging you to support **S. 47**, which proposes to increase the tax credits available to businesses offering childcare programs for employees and creates a new tax credit for individuals employed full-time in childcare at licensed facilities. This legislation is crucial to addressing the workforce participation crisis in South Carolina, where lack of childcare and the need to stay home with children are significant barriers to employment, as highlighted by the SC DEW labor force participation study.

Using state and federal data sources, our United Way partner, United for ALICE®, found that **more than half - 53%!- of children in South Carolina live in households that are experiencing financial hardship.**

- This figure includes the 19% of families living below the Federal Poverty Level, but also includes an **additional 34% of the population who are above the Federal Poverty Level who are working hard, yet not earning enough to afford the rising cost of basic necessities.**
- This amounts to a total of **590,263 children** across the state and **ranks South Carolina 38th among all 50 states and DC.**

The United for ALICE® Children's Report also shows that having working adults in the household did NOT guarantee financial stability.

- **35% of households with two adults in the labor force were still below the ALICE® Threshold,** meaning they are working, yet not earning enough to afford the cost of basic necessities.
- **Nearly all of these children- 94%- live in a household with at least one working adult.**

We strongly urge you to support S. 47 to provide increased childcare options in our communities. This will not only remove one of the primary barriers to workforce participation, it will have a ripple effect in our communities that will cultivate a more resilient economy, enable more students to be better prepared to enter kindergarten and increase the financial security of our local families.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of D.J. Hampton II.

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A blue ink signature of Devon Wade.

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