

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510
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May 23, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you put funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) on a path to double in five years. Of the many funding priorities before your subcommittee, there are few as crucial to America's working families as child care assistance provided through CCDBG.

Bottom line – Americans can't work if they don't have safe and reliable child care for their family. To maintain stable employment or participate in an education or training program, parents with young children need child care. Breakdowns in child care force parents to leave work early, arrive late to work, miss a shift or full day of work, and or become distracted while at work.

These past two years have crystallized the direct link between child care and parent employment. Throughout the entire pandemic, child care stayed open. Child care providers around the country implemented numerous enhanced health and safety protocols that by and large, even in the absence of vaccines, kept children and staff safe.

CCDBG proved itself to be the exact right architecture for delivering federal child care assistance during the pandemic. The infusion of additional federal dollars into the CCDBG program through the various emergency COVID bills, coupled with the quick actions of state child care administrators through the flexibility provided in the CCDBG program, kept child care from collapse. Thanks to extra funding provided through CCDBG, states expanded access to child care for essential workers, reduced parent co-pays, increased provider reimbursement rates to cover fixed and operational expenses, reimbursed providers based on enrollment versus attendance to stabilize provider cash flow, and provided wage supplements and bonuses to raise child care staff wages and incentivize staff to stay.

Further, since CCDBG has historically served large numbers of school-age children whose parents need before and after school care, the CCDBG architecture proved itself to be invaluable during the pandemic as providers offered school age children a safe and supported place to do their online learning while their parents worked.

Child care is indispensable for America's working families as well as for the greater U.S. economy. Placing CCDBG on a path, starting with the FY2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, to double in funding in five years would allow states to continue and improve upon the many enhancements they made to their CCDBG programs during the pandemic to better serve families, children, teachers, and providers.

We appreciate the bipartisan support you have shown CCDBG in the past, and we hope to continue to work with you to prioritize child care and CCDBG as the appropriations process moves forward this year.

Sincerely,



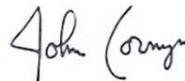
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