

May 20, 2010

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Ranking Member Cochran, Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Obey, and Ranking Member Lewis:

The Child Care and Early Learning Coalition urges Congress to include \$1 billion in additional funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) as part of the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. This funding will give more parents the access to the child care they need to get and keep a job.

Parents cannot work without reliable child care, and many low-income parents cannot afford child care without the type of assistance that CCDBG provides them. Yet only about one in seven children eligible for federal child care assistance currently receives help.

The additional CCDBG funding provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act—which will soon end—demonstrates the difference that increased investments can make for children and families. For example, Arizona prevented about 9,000 children a month from losing their child care assistance. Alabama was able to maintain support for 3,000 children who were about to lose child care assistance. A number of other states were able to provide child care assistance and reduce their waiting lists for help. Yet, approximately one-third of states continue to place families on waiting lists for child care assistance.

Studies show that families on waiting lists frequently struggle to afford child care on their own, which makes it difficult for them to hold on to their jobs, and are often unable to pay bills for other basic expenses. Conversely, studies show that families who are able to receive child care assistance are more likely to work—for example, one study found that single mothers of young children who received child care assistance were 39 percent more likely to still be employed after two years.

As we strive to create more jobs, it is important that we make it possible for families to have good child care while they work. This is a critical downpayment helping to achieve the goals of expanding employment and strengthening our nation's economy.

Sincerely,

Afterschool Alliance
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
Children's Defense Fund
Child Welfare League of America
CLASP

Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children
Early Care and Education Consortium
Easter Seals
First Five Years Fund
First Focus Campaign for Children
HighScope Educational Research Foundation
IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA)
MomsRising
National Association for Family Child Care
National Association for Regulatory Administration
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies
National Black Child Development Institute
National Women's Law Center
Pre-K Now
RESULTS
Service Employees International Union
Teaching Strategies, Inc.
Voices for America's Children
YMCA of the USA
YWCA USA
ZERO TO THREE

cc: Chairman Tom Harkin