

# AUGUST RECESS GUIDE TO CHILD CARE ADVOCACY <sup>2017</sup>



A Campaign of Child Care Advocates and Allies  
Developed by the National Women's Law Center

During the month of August, Congress is traditionally not in session and most elected officials spend much of the month back in their home district or state. This can be a great time to schedule a meeting to talk to your representatives or their staff. Here's a quick guide to get you started!

## Set Up an In-District Meeting

Reach out to the district office to set up a meeting with your Senators or Representative. Use this time to show why it is so important to increase funding to expand access to high-quality child care for all families who need it and raise rates for providers. Then, spread the word!

**Step 1** Find your Members of Congress: Visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) to identify your two Senators and your Representative. Then, locate their nearest offices by visiting your Members' official websites (offices are frequently listed near the bottom or along a sidebar).

**Step 2** Schedule the Meetings: Call the offices directly to schedule a meeting saying, "Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a constituent. I would like to schedule a meeting with the Senator/Congressperson in August to discuss the importance of high-quality child care and good wages for providers."

**Step 3** Get Prepared: Before meeting with your Member of Congress or their staff, make sure to do a little bit of homework! We recommend finding some facts to illustrate the urgency to act. For example:

- The average cost of full-time child care is out of reach for many parents, ranging from \$3,000 per year to over \$17,000 per year depending on age of child, type of care, and where the family lives.
- Five out of six children eligible for federal child care assistance do not receive it, primarily due to lack of funding.
- The average salary for child care workers is just \$11.02 per hour.

You can find fact sheets, reports, and other helpful resources at [www.nwlc.org/child-care-now](http://www.nwlc.org/child-care-now).

**Step 4** Present Your Case: Start the meeting with a clear idea of what you plan to discuss. We strongly recommend personalizing the issue by sharing a story about how this matter affects real children, parents, and workers. Finally, be specific about what you'd like your Member of Congress to do. Here are two examples of things you might ask your Senators or Representative:

1. Will you support increased funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant and other early learning programs?
2. Will you oppose tax-based solutions that primarily benefit wealthy families?

**Step 5** Follow Up: Send a thank-you note, provide additional materials, and continue to keep in touch with your Member of Congress as new developments take place.

**Bonus:** If your member is supportive, we recommend taking a friendly photo during your visit and posting it on Facebook or Twitter to help spread the word! This can be a fun way to thank the Member or their staff for their time and mention the importance of increased funding for child care. Use the hashtag #ChildCareNOW

Ex. "Just had a great meeting about importance of investing in child care with @RepJohnDoe #ChildCareNOW [photo]"