

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 25, 2024

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write today to reiterate our support for robust funding for child care in the final Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 funding legislation. Without additional investments by the federal government, child care will remain unaffordable and hard to find for working families, and child care providers will continue to struggle. We appreciate the \$1.6 billion increase for child care assistance in the Senate's Labor, Health and Human Services, Education bill voted out of the Appropriations Committee in August, and we urge you to protect and prioritize funding for child care as you finalize FY 2025 appropriations legislation. When Congress invests in child care, kids, families, communities, and the economy are stronger.

Congress has taken important steps to protect the child care industry from collapse. The American Rescue Plan Act provided \$15 billion in supplemental funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and \$24 billion to create the Child Care Stabilization grants. These vital stabilization grants helped more than 220,000 child care providers stay in business, and saved an estimated 10 million child care slots. The combined COVID-19 relief funds reduced child care costs for more than 1 million children.¹ The historic \$39 billion in child

¹ <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/infographic/covid-investments-child-care-supporting-children-families-and-providers>

care funding has since expired, and the absence of additional investments continues to affect the child care sector. The stabilization funds helped child care providers cover their costs without raising fees for families. In a poll conducted one month after the expiration of stabilization grants, RAPID, in partnership with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), found that 29 percent of families surveyed had already seen their child care tuition increase.²

Despite consistent bipartisan support for increasing investments in federal child care assistance, funding for the child care system has not met the needs of American families. The challenges affecting access to child care are not new, and this shortage has continued to strain our economy. Recently, The Century Foundation reported that since 2019, child care prices have increased by 6 percent in Wisconsin and 46 percent in New York.³ The broken child care market has created increasing tension among families, workers, and providers: child care providers cannot afford to run their businesses or pay adequate wages to their staff using only revenue from parents, and while child care costs remain unaffordable and unsustainable for working families. For years, the situation has been a nightmare for families, particularly for many families with low incomes, families of color, families seeking infant and toddler care, parents who need specialized care for children with disabilities, and those who need care during non-traditional hours. These costs are forcing parents – specifically women – out of the workforce.⁴

The child care workforce has been one of the slowest sectors to recover from the pandemic. Wages for this critical workforce remain unacceptably low, further fueling the shortage of available child care options for families. Department of Labor data shows that between March and September 2024, the number of child care workers has largely stayed the same.⁵ Earlier this year, NAEYC conducted a survey showing that 56 percent of child care providers reported being under-enrolled relative to their capacity, due to staffing shortages (89 percent), low pay (77 percent), and lack of affordability for families (66 percent).⁶ The workforce shortage and the frequent turnover of the workforce are directly attributable to the low wages and lack of benefits in the sector. In fact, the inadequate compensation contributes to turnover in child care workers that is approximately 65 percent higher than other industries.⁷ Caregiving underpins all other work: parents rely on care for their kids, allowing employers nationwide to keep their doors open.

We appreciate the \$725 million increase for CCDBG in the FY 2024 spending bill. It is essential Congress again act in a bipartisan manner to expand and restore critical federal resources for affordable, high-quality child care. By securing robust funding for child care in the FY 2025 appropriations legislation, we can meet the needs of families, providers, and employers.

² https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/nov_survey_brief.pdf

³ <https://tcf.org/content/report/child-care-funding-cliff-at-one-year/>

⁴ <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/playbook-for-the-advancement-of-women-in-the-economy/providing-affordable-accessible-and-high-quality-child-care/>

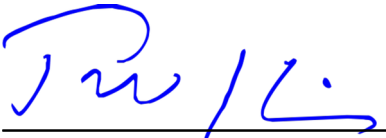
⁵ <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CES6562440001>

⁶ https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/2.24_naeyc_survey_press_release_final_1.pdf

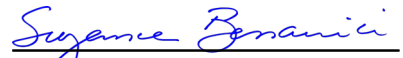
⁷ <https://www.clevelandfed.org/publications/cd-reports/2024/20240119-childcare-and-education-workforce>

The temporary, federal child care funds and historic increases to annual child care funding provided much-needed lifelines to the child care industry, but it is crucial that, at minimum, we sustain that level of investment to secure this sector's survival and prevent this emergency from worsening. Child care providers, employers, workers, children, and families need our help. We urge you to provide a robust investment to address the growing child care crisis. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

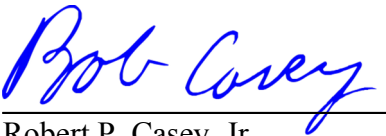
Sincerely,



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



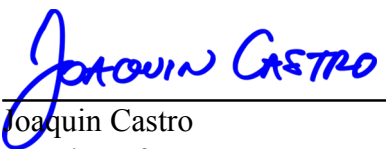
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



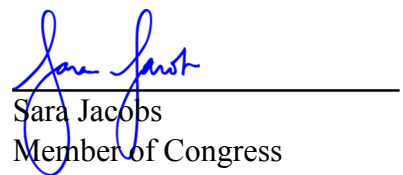
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



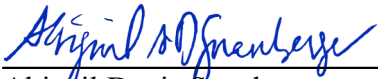
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress



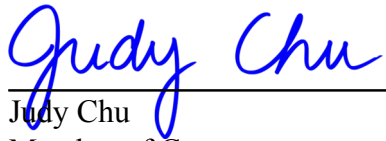
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



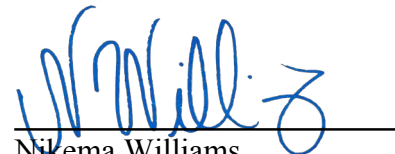
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



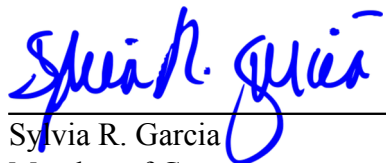
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



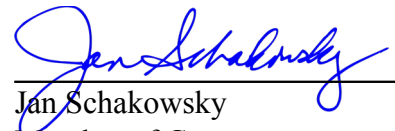
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



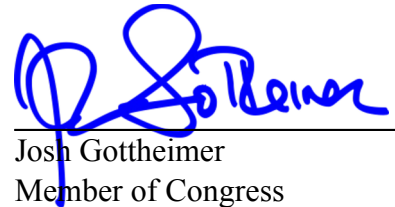
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



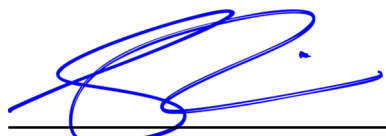
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



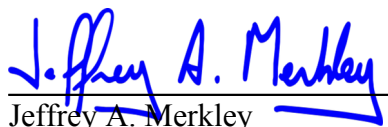
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



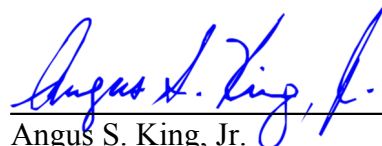
Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator




Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



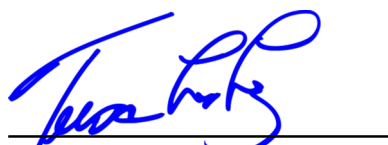
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



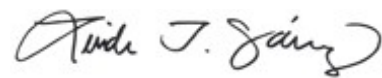
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



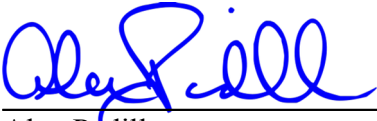
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



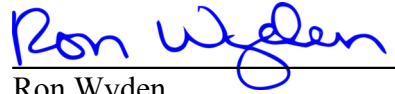
Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



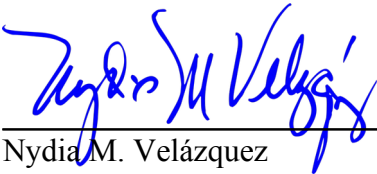
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



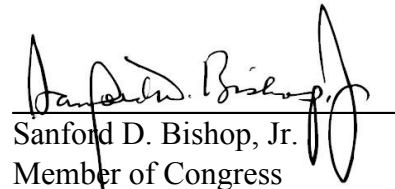
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



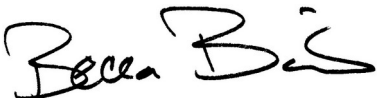
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



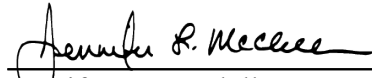
Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



George S. Helmy
United States Senator



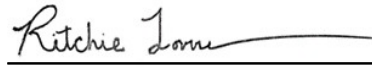
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



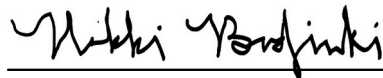
Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



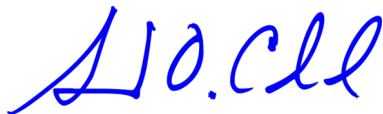
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



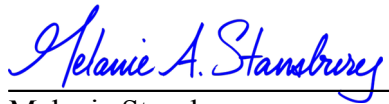
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



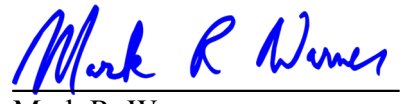
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



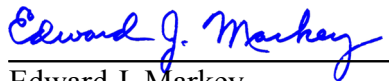
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



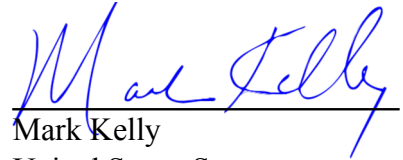
Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



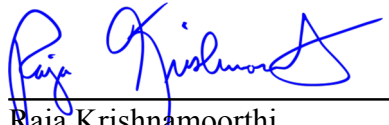
Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



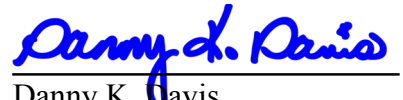
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



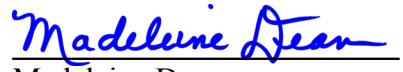
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



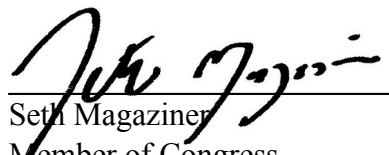
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



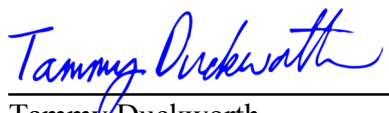
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



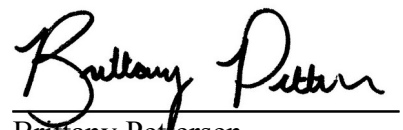
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



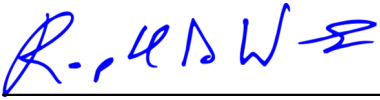
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



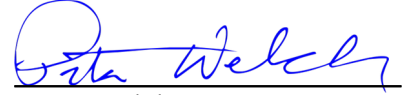
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



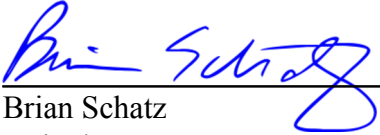
Andy Kim
Member of Congress



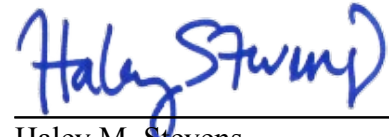
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



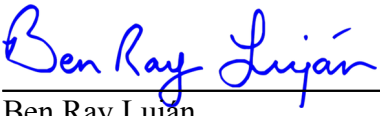
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



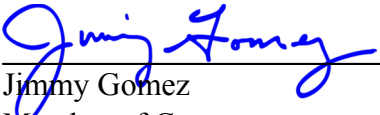
Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Emilia Strong Sykes
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



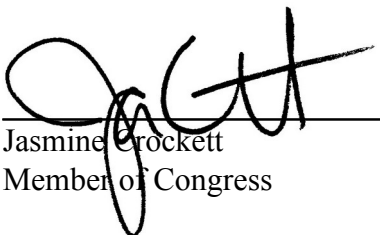
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



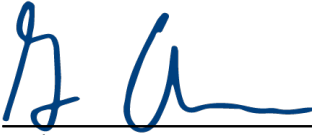
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



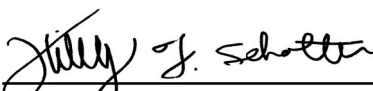
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



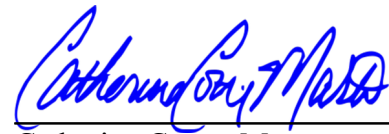
Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



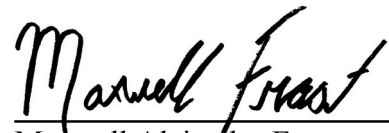
Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Laphonza Butler
United States Senator



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress