



March 12, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair
Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Mitchell & Assemblymember Ting:

The Early Care and Education (ECE) Coalition is a partnership of early childhood education advocacy and service organizations working together to secure access to high quality early learning and care for California's low-income children and families. We all know that early care and education is vital to giving California's kids everything they need for a bright future while supporting working families, and we are urging you to support a one billion dollar increase in the 2018-19 budget to meet their childcare needs.

Well-established research demonstrates that the first three years of a child's life are critical to a child's positive brain development. Parents need access to child care that promotes their child's healthy development and learning while they work. However, affordable child care is simply not available for

most low-income families. This crisis is particularly acute for our state's babies--less than 14 percent of California's eligible infants and toddlers, ages 0-2, have access to affordable, subsidized care. The severe undersupply of infant and toddler care is creating a crisis for working parents, their families, our businesses, and our state's future. The state needs to begin this budget year with critical investments for new child care spaces, adequate per-child funding, age appropriate facilities and infrastructure, start-up support, and professional development for all care settings.

Specifically, we request that you take the following actions:

- 1) *A \$1 billion dollar increase in child care spaces to immediately improve access for California's families.*
- 2) *Provide supports for providers across the ECE system to open their doors to all our babies and toddlers in need by:*
 - *Increasing the infant/toddler factor to better reflect the actual cost of high quality care;*
 - *Reestablishing professional development days for Title 5 providers; and*
 - *Providing child care centers with start-up funds as a percentage of contracts so providers can begin to convert existing preschool classrooms into appropriate infant and toddler rooms.*
- 3) *Support the Governor's Early Education Expansion Program, using the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) definition of Early Childhood Inclusion to ensure it will provide equitable opportunity for all types of early learning providers, and significantly augment its one-time funding to support facilities, equipment, professional development, and other quality improvements across our mixed-delivery system.*
- 4) *Support the Child Care Initiative Project and professional development for all levels of care through the strategic use of one-time carry over funds of the Child Care Development Fund - Quality Improvement (CCDF-QI) funds. The Coalition continues to support ongoing funding for the consumer education database from the CCDF-QI funds.*

We agree with the Legislative Women's Caucus: California's working families need greater access to child care. Moving forward, the workforce that cares for our earliest learners and working families urge a desperately needed a one billion dollar increase in the 2018-19 State Budget to meet our childcare needs. In addition, as we anticipate additional state revenues and California being in a much healthier financial position this spring, these dollars also need to address one-time asks within the early learning field. We wholeheartedly support the direction of the Legislative Women's Caucus.

If you have any questions or need assistance with child care data, costs, or technical assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
The Early Care and Education Coalition

Cc: Members, Assembly Budget Sub 1 and 2
Members, Senate Budget Sub 1 and 3

¹ NAEYC Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion: Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.