

## SUPPORT EARLY EDUCATION AND WORKING FAMILIES

Use this [form](#) to sign on no later than Noon on March 25, 2019

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in writing to House Appropriators in support of three critical programs to the well-being of America's young children, women, and working families.

**Early education and intervention** yields a lifetime of positive benefits—not just for our youngest learners, but also for our nation's economy as a whole. These programs provide an outsized return to the American taxpayer, both supporting the economic competitiveness of future generations, and allowing each child an equal opportunity to succeed.

Access to **quality child care** is a basic element of economic fairness. Far too often, hardworking American parents are forced to choose between ensuring their child's healthy development and making ends meet.

Our letter ensures high-impact federal investments in **both** of these areas remain intact.

Specifically, we call for the following:

- **Provide an additional \$5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for Fiscal Year 2020.** Child care remains one of the greatest expenses faced by American families, and far too many parents struggle to afford child care that promotes their children's health development while also making basic ends meet. CCDBG, the major federal child care program, helps families with the cost of child care and supports States to improve the quality of care. Every month, CCDBG assists 796,000 American families in paying for child care for over 1.3 million American children. CCDBG received a historic funding increase that was long overdue for FY 2019. States committed this funding to address pressing needs, including helping more families with the cost of care, raising payment rates to extremely low-paid child care providers, and supporting implementation of the crucial reforms. Despite this increase, more work needs to be done to help families. Currently, only one in six children eligible for federal child care assistance receives it, and as of February 2018, only one state was paying providers at the federally recommended rate. Increasing CCDBG by \$5 billion in FY 2020 – for a total discretionary funding level of \$10.276 billion – would allow States to build on their current work to improve access to high-quality care. In FY 2020, this funding increase could provide as many as 670,000 additional children help through CCDBG.
- **Funding Grants for Infants and Families (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) at no less than \$491,300,000 which equals the enacted (FY18 full-year) level indexed for two years of inflation.** A simple toddler hearing test costs under \$50, but a missed, or late hearing impairment diagnosis costs a lifetime of diminished communication skills. This program supports early intervention and screening where it counts, when it counts, for 389,000 children per year.

- **Funding Preschool Grants (Part B Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) at no less than \$398,400,000 which equals the enacted (FY18 full-year) level indexed for two years of inflation.** These funds leverage state investment to ensure approximately 800,000 young children (ages 3-5) with disabilities enter school ready to succeed.

I hope you will join us in urging House Appropriators to include increased funding for CCDBG in FY20.

The letter will close **noon on March 25, 2019**. To sign on to the letter, please fill out this [form](#).

Any additional questions can be directed to [Michelle.Steever@mail.house.gov](mailto:Michelle.Steever@mail.house.gov) or [Kate.McCann@mail.house.gov](mailto:Kate.McCann@mail.house.gov) or [Mariah.Carray@mail.house.gov](mailto:Mariah.Carray@mail.house.gov) or [Vincent.Sarubbi@mail.house.gov](mailto:Vincent.Sarubbi@mail.house.gov).

Thank you for your consideration.

KATHERINE CLARK

Member of Congress

NORMA J TORRES

Member of Congress

MARCIA L. FUDGE

Member of Congress

DONALD NORCROSS

Member of Congress

March XX, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, and Education  
2368-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, and Education  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

As you consider Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations legislation, we urge you to include the following high-impact investments in early education, early intervention, and quality child care:

**Provide an additional \$5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for Fiscal Year 2020.** After a historic funding increase for CCDBG in 2018 (which was maintained and slightly expanded in FY 2019), states were able to make important progress in addressing the pressing needs of children and families. However, significant additional investment is necessary to address large gaps in the number of eligible children who are served by the program and to enable more low-income women to work. An additional \$5 billion for the program would result in:

- **Serve up to 670,000 more children:** By doubling the funding for CCDBG for FY 2020, states would be able to expand access to child care assistance to as many as 670,000 additional children. Even though nearly 14 million children are eligible, only 15% of eligible children receive assistance from CCDBG and related funding streams. In fact, more than 450,000 *fewer* children are currently served by the program than were served in 2006.<sup>1</sup>
- **Greater program improvements:** Currently, most states set their initial income eligibility limits below the federal maximum level and, as of February 2018, only one state paid providers at the Federally recommended rate. While the FY 2018 CCDBG funding increase has been used to improve these policies in some States, it was not enough to sufficiently expand eligibility for children and families or raise payments to all providers. By committing to a continued investment in CCDBG, states are further incentivized to expand their income eligibility limits. The median income eligibility limit

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<sup>1</sup> CLASP, *Child Care Assistance Spending and Participation in 2016, 2018*, <https://www.clasp.org/publications/fact-sheet/child-care-assistance-spending-and-participation-2016>. An additional 49,400 children lost child care assistance between 2016 and 2017.

across states for a family of three, currently, is close to \$36,756 whereas the median eligibility limit allowable under federal law falls closer to \$56,575.<sup>2</sup>

- **Empowering women to join the workforce:** According to the Department of Health and Human Services, increases in CCDBG subsidies have the potential to substantially increase labor force participation and employment rates of low-income mothers in the United States. The report found that tripling subsidies above 2016 levels would result in the employment of 652,000 women. Furthermore, the National Women's Law Center and the Center for Law and Social Policy estimate that doubling the funding for CCDBG in 2020 could result in creating paid work for *as many as* 141,000 caregivers.<sup>3</sup>

We believe that an additional investment of \$5 billion in the Child Care Development Block Grant is vital to supporting our nation's caregivers and improving economic mobility for women. In addition, this increase will expand the program's ability to support the more of the roughly 11.5 million eligible children who are not receiving services.

**Provide at least \$491,300,000 in FY19 funding for Grants for Infants and Families under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, equal to the enacted FY17 level indexed for two years of inflation.** A simple child hearing test costs under \$50. A missed or late hearing impairment diagnosis costs a lifetime of diminished communication skills. This program allows states to provide early intervention and screening for 389,000 American children per year, including but not limited to hearing tests. Renowned economists, including Nobel Laureate James Heckman, have demonstrated high-quality early education can produce from \$7 to \$16 in benefits for every \$1 spent. This substantial return on investment is derived largely from long-term savings associated with a reduced need for special education, improved health outcomes, higher rates of high school and college graduation, decreased dependence on welfare programs, and increased workforce productivity of children who receive a high-quality early education.

**Provide at least \$398,400,000 in FY19 funding for Preschool Grants under Part B Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, equal to the enacted FY17 level indexed for two years of inflation.** These funds leverage significant nonfederal investment to ensure 800,000 children with disabilities aged 3-5 enter school ready to succeed. As stated above, research has demonstrated early childhood education is an effective strategy for improving the developmental outcomes and long-term success of children, especially low-income children. This program is a critical part of that effort.

Together, these programs have an outsized impact on the economic competitiveness of future generations. They also provide a strong, continuing return to the American taxpayer by both ensuring the sustained prosperity of our nation as a whole and helping families succeed.

We hope you will fully support these critical investments in working women, families, and young learners.

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<sup>2</sup> The federal income standard is 85% of State Median Income. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im2017-03>.

<sup>3</sup> Unpublished analysis by CLASP and NWLC based on CCDF Data.

Sincerely,

KATHERINE CLARK

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NORMA J TORRES

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