

The Honorable Joseph Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

March 19, 2021

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

We, the undersigned, deeply appreciate your leadership on the American Rescue Plan, and, want to especially thank you for delivering on the promise to support child care by ensuring the sector receives more than \$50 billion total in child care relief. These critical investments will help stabilize an otherwise collapsing child care sector, support parents and other caregivers' ability to work and care for children, support children's healthy development, and raise wages for the essential workers who care for and educate children every day.

But returning to a broken status quo is not enough. The pandemic has laid bare and exacerbated the deep inequities of a child care system that relies on families paying unaffordable sums and early educators being paid poverty-level wages. It is time to put a stake in the ground and build a comprehensive child care and early education system that works for our nation's children, families, educators, and economy.

To that end, we look forward to working with you to advance your plan to mobilize American talent and heart to build a 21st century caregiving and education workforce. We write today to offer our partnership and support to ensure that equitable economic recovery efforts include provisions that;

- Ensure families have access to high-quality, affordable child care that is available when and where they need it and invests in the education and compensation of a diverse workforce through the model offered by the Child Care for Working Families Act, providing child care, after school and summer care options for both young children and school-age children.
- Treat caregivers and early childhood educators with respect and dignity for their valuable and complex work, pay them living wages, benefits, and ensure parity with elementary school teachers; provide

professional development and career ladders to higher-paying early care and education jobs; a voice in the system; the choice to join a union and bargain collectively, and other fundamental work-related rights and protections.

- Provide equitable access to preschool in a model that is inclusive of centers, schools, community-based organizations, Head Start, Early Head Start and family child care homes, and supports a strong, just birth to age 5 system.
- Support safe, energy-efficient, developmentally appropriate child care facilities, especially in child care deserts, and home-based options in all neighborhoods and all settings.

These policies - many of which you outlined during your campaign - are crucial infrastructure and economic recovery investments in America that will:

- **Create millions of additional good-paying jobs:** The Child Care for Working Families Act [would create 2.3 million new jobs](#) - a combination of jobs with better compensation for early educators and support for the workforce participation of parents.
- **Enable parents - especially mothers - to participate in the labor force:** Since the start of the pandemic, the [decline in mothers' labor force participation has been nearly double that of fathers'](#) and research shows that COVID has led to mothers of young children reducing work hours [four to five times as much as fathers](#). Supporting parents with high-quality and affordable care options that include availability of care during nontraditional hours will help reverse the staggering decline in women's labor force participation, which disproportionately impacts Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) women.
- **Lay a strong foundation for children's development:** As the first years of a child's life are the period of the most rapid brain development and lay the foundation for all future learning, access to equitable and culturally responsive quality child care and early learning options [profoundly shapes the early experiences of our youngest children](#) during a critical time in their development, and ensures that regardless of economic status, race, zip code, language and disability all children have a strong foundation.
- **Advance gender and racial equity:** The disproportionately Black, Latina, Indigenous, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and immigrant women who work in child care and early education need better jobs and working conditions. Black mothers who are more likely to be in the workforce and more likely to be their families' [primary breadwinner](#) than other mothers need child care they can depend on. And our nation's children, [nearly half of whom are children of color](#), need investments in their care and education from birth to age 13.

The United States has not had a comprehensive child care and early education system since a brief period during World War II. Since then American families have been largely left on their own to fend for themselves, relying on the underpaid labor of Black, Latinx, Indigenous and immigrant women, and the time of older siblings to cover the care needs of families instead of attending to their own education. The federal child care programs that are in place cover a tiny fraction of those eligible and a [tiny fraction of the costs of care](#) and make it especially hard for children experiencing disabilities to receive care.

Child care is infrastructure. It connects workers and jobs. It makes all other work possible. It supports the positive growth and development of our nation's youngest children. Without a child care system that works for every family, our economy will suffer in the short and long term. We look forward to working with your administration to prioritize child care and early learning as a key facet of our national economic infrastructure.

Sincerely,

9to5

A Better Balance

ACCESS (Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services)

Action for Children

ADFW Child Care Family Child Care Network

Advocates for Children of New Jersey

AFL-CIO

AFSCME (AFL-CIO)

Afterschool Alliance

Alabama Arise

Alabama Family Child Care Association

Alabama Institute for Social Justice

All Our Kin

Alliance for Quality Education

American Federation of Teachers

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)

Assets Matter

Aunt Jackie's Child Care Home

Bank Street College- Education Center

Bay Area Council

Better Life Lab at New America

BlackHer

Build Up California

Colorado Association of Family Child Care (CAFCC)

California Alternative Payment Program Association (CAPPA)

California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC)

California Child Care Resource & Referral

Network

The California Work & Family Coalition

CAPPA Children's Foundation

Caring Across Generations

Center for American Progress

Center for Economic and Policy Research

Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR)

Chicago Foundation for Women

Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles

Child Care Aware of America

Child Care Law Center

Child Care Resources of Montana

Child Care Services Association

Child Welfare League of America

Childhaven

Children Now

Children's Forum

Children's Advocacy Alliance

Children's Defense Fund

Children's HealthWatch

Children's Institute - Oregon

Citizen Action of New York

The Center for Law and Social Policy

Closing the Women's Wealth Gap

Colorado Children's Campaign

Common Good Iowa

Community Change Action

Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces

Council for Professional Recognition

COVID Community Care

Crossroads United Way

Darke County United Way

Data for Progress

DC Action

DC Family Child Care Association

**Division for Early Childhood of the Council
for Exceptional Children (DEC)**

**Early Care & Education Pathways to
Success (ECEPTS)**

Early Edge California

**Early Learner South Dakota & United Way of
the Black Hills**

ECE on the Move

Economic Policy Institute

Educare Learning Network

EMC Communications

Empire State Campaign for Child Care

Equal Rights Advocates

EveryChild California

Family Child Care Association of Maine

Family Forward Oregon

Family Values @ Work

First 5 Association of California

First 5 California

First Five Years Fund

First Focus Campaign for Children

**Florida Family Child Care Home
Association**

Futures Without Violence

**GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance
for Ready Students**

**Georgetown Center on Poverty and
Inequality Economic Security and
Opportunity Initiative**

Global Policy Solutions

Groundwork Ohio

Hawai i Children's Action Network Speaks!

Head Start California

Healthy Child Care Colorado

Helpr

Hey Mirza

**IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators
Association (ITCA)**

In the Public Interest

Indiana United Ways

**Insight Center for Community Economic
Development**

Institute for Childhood Preparedness

Institute for Women's Policy Research

Justice for Migrant Women

LA Women's Collective

Lake Area United Way

Leah Davis Coaching

Let's Grow Kids

LIFT

Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

Low Income Investment Fund

Main Street Alliance

Maine Children's Alliance

Maine People's Alliance

Make It Work Nevada

Martha Christenson Lees

**Maryland State Family Child Care
Association**

Massachusetts Association of Early Education & Care

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

MCCOY (Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc.)

Metro United Way

Michigan Association of United Ways

Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiative

MomsRising

Mothering Justice

MyVillage

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Association for Family Child Care

National Association for the Education of Young Children

National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education

National Association of Social Workers

National Center for Children in Poverty

National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Child Care Association (NCCA)

National Council of Jewish Women

National Domestic Workers Alliance

National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

National Education Association

National Employment Law Project

National Indian Child Care Association

National Partnership for Women & Families

National WIC Association

National Workforce Registry Alliance

National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)

NC Child

NCBCP Black Women's Roundtable

Neighborhood Villages

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

New America Early & Elementary Education Policy Program

New Mexico Voices for Children

New York Association for the Education of Young Children

Northern Berkshire United Way

National Women's Law Center

Ohio Organizing Collaborative

OLÉ Education Fund

Oxfam America

Paid Leave for All

Parent Voices CA

Parents Organized to Win, Educate and Renew - Policy Action Council, Illinois (POWER-PAC IL)

ParentsTogether Action

Partnership for America's Children

PEACH Early Childhood Higher Ed Collaborative

PL+US

Policy Matters Ohio

PowHer™ New York

PRE4CLE

Prince George County Family Child Care Association

Prospera Community Development

Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)

Restaurant Opportunities Centers United

RESULTS

RESULTS DC/MD

Roca, Inc.

Save the Children Action Network

SaverLife

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

SEIU Education and Support Fund

Shma Koleinu/Hear Our Voices

SPACeS In Action

Start Early

Startup Parent

Strategies for Children

Supermajority

Teach Plus

The Arc of the United States

The Connecticut Association for Human Services

The New York Women's Foundation

The West Side Commons

TIME'S UP Now

UNICEF USA

UNITE-LA

United Parent Leaders Action Network (UPLAN)

United State of Women

United Way of Broward County

United Way of Buffalo and Erie County

United Way of Central Ohio

United Way of Clark, Champaign & Madison Counties

United Way of Greater Cincinnati

United Way of Greater Stark County

United Way of Greater Toledo

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas

United Way of St Joseph County

United Way of Westchester and Putnam

United Way Worldwide

United Way of King County

Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children

Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

Voices for Virginia's Children

Vote Mama Foundation

Washington Area Women's Foundation

Washington State Parent Ambassadors

WCRJ Preschool

Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco)

Women Employed

Women's Fund of Rhode Island

YMCA of the East Bay

YWCA USA

ZERO TO THREE