



Early Care and Education Consortium

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Dear Senator,

The Early Care and Education Consortium (ECEC) represents the nation's leading providers of child care and early learning programs. ECEC members' 7,600 child care centers serve nearly 800,000 young children from all income levels and employ tens of thousands of early educators across the country. We know the needs of the communities we serve, and the policies that work, especially now in this time of economic crisis.

We urge you to vote yes on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and support the \$2 billion investment in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). This investment will save and create jobs for early educators and support staff, help prepare children to enter school ready to succeed and ultimately become productive members of the future workforce, and enable their parents to work *today*. The funding for child care included in the Act will allow states to provide child care assistance for approximately 300,000 children in low-income working families who have been hit hard by the economic crisis as well as create 124,000 jobs for child care providers.

An economic recovery package focused on job creation must recognize that parents of young children can not go to work without child care. The young children of these workers will need a safe place to be; families eligible to receive child care assistance will need access to that assistance right away so they can go to work.

Child care assistance offers immediate relief to struggling families. Cuts to assistance, and the ever-increasing cost of child care, mean more families can not pay for child care. Parents of all income levels are forced to look for alternatives or risk losing their jobs. The challenges brought by national economic decline include families' struggles to afford the basics of housing, rising food costs, and high-quality, affordable early care and education programs. As unemployment increases and salaries, hours and wages go down at all kinds of jobs, child care choices are directly impacted. Parents are stringing together caregivers and hoping for the best as they work, look for work, or seek job training.

And, child care is an important sector of the economy in its own right. The licensed child care sector allows parents to earn more than \$100 billion annually and these additional wages, in turn, generate nearly \$580 billion in direct and indirect labor income, approximately \$69 billion in tax revenues, and more than 15 million jobs.

With \$2 billion for CCDBG, the Act will immediately create jobs in the child care and early education sector, allow parents to stay employed or take advantage of new job opportunities knowing their children are safe and well cared for, and boost children's chances for success in the future by improving learning opportunities for young children.

Eric Karolak
Early Care and Education Consortium
Washington, DC

Bright Horizons Family Solutions
Headquarters: Watertown, MA

Brightside Academy
Headquarters: Pittsburgh, PA

Childcare Business Coalition of Hawaii
Headquarters: Honolulu, HI

Childcare Network
Headquarters: Columbus, GA

Easter Seals Child Development Network
Headquarters: Chicago, IL

Human Services Management Corporation
Headquarters: San Francisco, CA

Knowledge Learning Corporation
Headquarters: Portland, OR

Learning Care Group
Headquarters: Novi, MI

Minnieland Private Day School
Headquarters: Woodbridge, VA

National Child Care Association
Headquarters: Spartanburg, SC

New Horizon Academy
Headquarters: Plymouth, MN

Nobel Learning Communities
Headquarters: West Chester, PA

Pennsylvania Child Care Association
Headquarters: Harrisburg, PA

Primrose Schools
Headquarters: Acworth, GA

Sunrise Preschools
Headquarters: Phoenix, AZ

The Sunshine House
Headquarters: Greenwood, SC