

Dear President- Elect Trump:

The Child Care and Early Learning Coalition welcomes your recognition of the importance of affordable, high-quality child care. Child care is critical to our nation's children, women, and families, to the professionals who care for and teach our young children, and to our economic growth and prosperity. The Coalition urges your Administration to move forward with substantial investments in high-quality child care, which will help parents work, boost the well-being of children, and make our economy stronger.

The signatories below support strategies that give low- and middle-income families financial help in affording high-quality child care so parents can succeed at work; that reflect families' preferences and needs for child care; that fund salaries needed to attract and retain well-qualified child care professionals; and that give children the early learning experiences they need to succeed in school and in life and to become productive members of the future workforce.

We hope to work with your Administration in its first 100 days to help hard-working families succeed through significant new investments in child care. We encourage you to make an initial investment in child care because it would shore up our nation's infrastructure. Child care is a vital part of our national infrastructure that is central to working families, communities, and the current and future economic success of our country. When we invest in building the best roads and bridges, we need to make sure that the workers building those roads and bridges have the best child care for their children. Simply put, parents cannot work if they do not have child care. As you have noted, today's workforce includes 73.5 million women, which represents 47 percent of the entire U.S. labor force. About 25.5 million of these women in the labor force have children under age 18, including over 10 million who have children under age six. These women need to work to help support their families, but the high cost of child care often makes this impossible.

The most effective, efficient way to invest in child care would be through a substantial increase in funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), our major federal child care program. The program, which provides vouchers directly to working families to help them afford the child care of their choice, is serving just one out of six children eligible for help, and the number of children receiving assistance has been steadily declining over the past several years due to insufficient federal funding. In 2014, Congress reauthorized the program—with broad bipartisan support—to protect the health and safety of children in child care and remove bureaucratic hurdles to families' getting and keeping child care assistance. By investing in this program, you can immediately provide greater opportunity to more low- and middle-income parents and help them get to work building highways, bridges, airports, and other projects.

Increased funding should also be used to expand the supply of child care. Child care employs millions of individuals in small and large businesses. Infrastructure funds should be used to upgrade and expand existing child care centers, build new child care centers, and cover start-up costs for small family child care businesses. The funding should be used improve the quality of child care jobs as well—these jobs currently pay, on average, less than \$11 an hour. When child care professionals are well-paid and have good working conditions, child care is more likely to be high-quality and provide a safer and more enriching setting for children so they can thrive.

Investments in child care should be targeted at those families who have been struggling the most in this economy. We need to make sure that these families are no longer overlooked and that they get the affordable, stable, high-quality child care they need to get and keep a job and their children need to encourage their learning and growth.

We look forward to working with you and with Congress to make these investments, that would benefit our children, our families, and our country.