

CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated existing disparities in our nation's child care system. Years of underinvestment in child care met with the challenges of the pandemic underscore the difficulty in accessing high-quality child care. Our system is broken and does not provide optimal outcomes for parents, employers, or children. **The Child Care for Working Families Act (S.1360/H.R. 2817)** aims to change that. Child Care Aware® of America supports the Child Care for Working Families Act.

Families need child care so they can work, and children need a safe place where they can learn and continue their healthy development. Unfortunately, there are far too many families who do not have access to the affordable and high-quality child care they need. On average, millions of working families pay more for child care than they would for housing, transportation needs, or food every month.

The Child Care for Working Families Act would help ensure access to high-quality, affordable child care for millions of families, and would greatly expand assistance at the federal level by:

- Creating a federal-state child care partnership for children from birth through age 13.
- More than doubling the number of children eligible for assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and ensuring these children gain access to high-quality early learning programs.
- Helping states create universal preschool programs for 3 and 4-year-olds in a mixed delivery system and providing a higher matching rate for infants and toddlers.
- Supporting the child care workforce through increased training and compensation to ensure they are paid a living wage.
- Establishing provider payment levels that reflect higher wages and provide investment in scholarships to earn credentials and degrees to grow the work force.
- Improving the quality of care in home-based, family, and neighbor settings and during nonstandard working hours to better support families.
- Offering training and professional development opportunities to providers for nutrition and physical activity, age-appropriate exposure to screen media and integration, utilization of instructional methods to assist learning across disciplines (literacy, arts, science, etc), and more
- Addressing the functional and access needs of children with disabilities (including infants and toddlers) in child care settings by increasing funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Helping Head Start provide full-day, full-year programming.
- Ensuring families can afford child care:
 - No working family earning below 150 percent of state median income pays more than seven percent of their income on child care, regardless of the number of children they have.
 - Families earning above 75 percent of the state median income would pay on a sliding scale. Families earning below 75 percent of the state median income will not have to pay anything at all.

CONGRESSIONAL STAFF CONTACTS

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