

May 22, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

As organizations committed to promoting the postsecondary success of college students with children, we are writing to express our strong support for increasing funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) program to \$200 million—the amount needed to provide child care support to approximately 2.5 percent of Pell-eligible student parents of children ages 0-5. The CCAMPIS program provides vital support for the participation and success of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of subsidized child care, which is widely recognized as one of the most important supports for parenting college students. The COVID-19 crisis has put into stark relief the challenges student parents—many of whom are also working parents—face balancing child care, academics, one job or several jobs, and precarious finances, even before the pandemic. Quadrupling CCAMPIS funding to \$200 million in the Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill would ensure that tens of thousands more parenting college students receive the child care assistance they need to continue their educational journeys and be successful in college.

Roughly 4 million college students are parents of dependent children, representing more than one in five undergraduates in the United States. Many of these student parents are balancing college and parenting without the support of a spouse or partner: 1.7 million women in college are single mothers. Student parents, and particularly those who are single, face acute financial, work, caregiving demands that can complicate their ability to persist to graduation. Student parents are more likely than other students to live in poverty, to have no resources to devote to college costs, and to incur substantial student debt—due in large part to the high cost of child care. Student parents also spend significant time providing care, with 21 percent of community college students spending more than 20 hours per week caring for dependents, according to the 2019 Community College Survey of Student Engagement.

Access to affordable child care is one of the most important supports that can help student parents succeed in college. Data from one community college show, for example, that usage of the campus child care center led to a 21 percent increase in degree attainment over the rate for student parents who did not access the center. New research shows, however, that students often do not have access to affordable care—according to a recent survey of roughly 23,000 student parents, 70 percent of respondents report that their child care arrangement is unaffordable. Without affordable child care, student parents are often forced to make tough decisions about their educational pursuit: in 2019, 28 percent of community college students reported that they are likely or very likely to leave school due to their caregiving responsibilities.

Unfortunately, campus-based child care has been declining in recent years, most dramatically at community colleges where the largest share of student parents are enrolled. Exacerbating this decline is the fact that, in light of the economic fallout caused by COVID-19, the country may lose as many as 4.5 million child care slots. The need for student parent access to affordable child care has never been greater than it will be as campuses begin to re-open.

The CCAMPIS program is the only federal program dedicated solely to providing child care assistance for students in postsecondary settings. Other available child care assistance, such as subsidies provided through the Child Care Development Block Grant, can be hard for student parents to access due to restrictive eligibility rules such as work requirements and degree limitations. CCAMPIS has no work requirements and it helps meet students' need for low-cost child care, enabling them to persist in and complete postsecondary credentials, which are critical to their families' economic well-being and are associated with a range of multigenerational benefits. Increasing the program's funding to serve a larger percentage of Pell-eligible students with young children would allow the program to reach tens of thousands more students, greatly improving their chances of postsecondary success.

For these reasons, we express our strong support for increasing funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) program to \$200 million in the FY21 Labor-H appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

All Our Kin
America Forward
Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
BCC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Charles Stewart Mott Community College
City University of New York
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Early Learning Campus, Inc
Every Child Matters
Feminist Majority Foundation
First Focus Campaign for Children
Florence Darlington Technical College
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Healthy Teen Network
Helen Gordon CDC, Portland State University
Higher Learning Advocates
Institute for Childhood Preparedness
Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR)
Jobs for the Future (JFF)
Los Angeles Valley College Family Resource Center
Mesa Community College
Monroe Community College (SUNY)

National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Indian Child Care Association
National Organization for Women
National Skills Coalition
National Women's Law Center
New America Education Policy Program
One Family
Oregon State University, Family Resource Center
Ray Ellison Family Center
Save the Children Action Network
Society of Women Engineers
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
St. Louis Community College
Student Veterans of America
The Graduate! Network, Inc
The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice
The National Child Care Association (NCCA)
The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
uAspire
Univ. of Hawaii Bridge to Hope
University of Delaware
University of Missouri St. Louis
University of New Mexico Children's Campus
Veterans Education Success
Women Employed
World Education, Inc.
Young Invincibles