

July 28, 2020

Congresswoman Gwen Moore
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

On behalf of the Milwaukee Early Childhood Education Civic Response Team, we're writing to urge your support for a \$50 billion investment in the child care sector in the next federal COVID-19 relief bill.

Our team is comprised of leaders from across Milwaukee's early childhood community and is working together to identify and respond to pressing needs in light of the COVID-19 emergency. We've secured local and national philanthropic dollars to help stabilize child care programs in our community and have procured and distributed critical supplies. We've also worked in close partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families in disseminating the \$51 million allocated to Wisconsin's child care sector under the CARES Act.

As valuable as these public and private resources have been to-date, they are not nearly sufficient to meet the ongoing, pressing needs of the child care sector. Child care providers have been on the front line of Milwaukee's COVID-19 response and economic recovery, providing care for the children of essential workers and other parents as they return to work. But as a result of enrollment limits and enhanced health and safety practices, revenues are declining, expenses are increasing, and providers are in a highly tenuous situation. Without additional support, state leaders project that 25 percent (or more) of child care providers could close permanently.¹ And, national polls suggest that these closures will disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities.²

Such closures would leave Milwaukee's working parents without access to child care, devastate our fragile economic recovery, and exacerbate the already profound gaps in access to quality, affordable child care in our communities.³ As is made clear by Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce and business leaders from across the country in a letter to Congress requesting child care investment, "For millions of Americans, returning to work is not just contingent on the lifting of stay-at-home orders and their employer reopening, but on securing care for their children. The existing childcare arrangements for many working parents have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and the resulting economic fallout."⁴

To prevent child care closures, we need sustained support from the federal government. Therefore, we join a wide range of voices, including a majority of voters from both sides of the aisle⁵, economists⁶, state attorneys general⁷, and child care advocates from across the nation⁸ in calling for a \$50 billion investment in child care in the next COVID-19 relief bill.

¹ Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, [Wisconsin Tomorrow: An Economy for All](#)

² National Association for the Education of Young Children, [Holding On Until Help Comes](#)

³ Greater Milwaukee Foundation, [A Seat at the Table: Ensuring Equitable Access to Early Childhood Education in Milwaukee](#)

⁴ US Chamber of Commerce, [Coalition Letter on Assistance for Childcare Providers](#)

⁵ First Five Years Fund and Center for American Progress, [Funding Child Care in Federal Relief Legislation](#)

⁶ [An Open Letter from Economists in Support of Child Care Relief](#)

⁷ [Letter from State Attorneys General](#)

⁸ [National and state organization's coalition letter to Congressional Leadership](#)

We urge you to support this critical investment. Milwaukee cannot recover if child care does not recover, and the same applies to communities across Wisconsin.

Thank you for your work during this crisis, and for your commitment to Milwaukee's children, working parents, and businesses.

Sincerely,

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