



May 16, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair
 Senate Budget Committee
 State Capitol, Room 5080
 Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair
 Assembly Budget Committee
 State Capitol, Room 6026
 Sacramento, CA 9581

Dear Senator Mitchell & Assemblymember Ting:

The Early Care and Education (ECE) Coalition is a partnership of early childhood education advocacy and service organizations working together to secure access to high quality early learning and care for California's low-income children and families. Early care and education is vital to giving California's children everything

they need for a bright future while supporting working families, and we urge you to support a \$1 billion increase in the 2018-19 budget to meet their child care needs.

The severe undersupply of infant and toddler care is creating a crisis for working parents, their families, our businesses, and our state's future. Our youngest children need the most care, but the least help is available for their families. We urge you this budget year to commit to making critical, substantial investments that meet the needs of working families, provide new child care spaces, adequate per-child funding, age appropriate facilities and infrastructure, start-up support, and professional development for all care settings.

California is the 5th largest economy in the world, yet it is providing affordable infant and toddler child care to less than 14% of eligible families. In contrast, United Kingdom, the 6th largest economy in the world, provides universal early care and education for 3- and 4-year-olds, as well as 30 hours a week of enriching care for infants and toddlers in families making less than \$136,000 annually. With support and investment in care for babies and toddlers, California will be creating a more seamless support system for children from the beginning of life to preschool and beyond.

Congressional Republicans and Democrats came together to increase the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) by \$5.8 billion in Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019. California will receive an additional \$231 million this year for child care, with the expectation that the increased funds will be used to help more low-income children get the nurturing care they need to thrive while their parents are working. California has an \$8.8 billion surplus as of the May revised budget. **We have faith that California can exceed the federal government's investment and follow their wisdom by investing in children from the beginning of their life.**

Specifically, we request that you take the following actions:

- 1) *A \$1 billion increase in flexible child care spaces to immediately improve access for California's families, as well as increasing the infant/toddler factor to better reflect the actual cost of high-quality care.*
- 2) *Provide a significant investment of one-time dollars across the ECE system so providers can open their doors to all our babies and toddlers in need by:*
 - *Reestablishing professional development days for Title 5 providers;*
 - *Providing subsidized child care centers with start-up grants so providers can begin to convert existing preschool classrooms into appropriate infant and toddler rooms; and*
 - *Providing additional funding to the Child Care Initiative Project to recruit and train new family child care providers;*
 - *Providing funding for the consumer education database.*

We thank the Legislative Women's Caucus for their leadership in these efforts and whole-heartedly agree that California's working families ought to have the child care they need to thrive.

If you have any questions or need technical assistance, do not hesitate to contact us.

The Early Care and Education Coalition

Cc: Members, Assembly Budget Sub 1 and 2
Members, Senate Budget Sub 1 and 3