
The Child Care for Working Families Act (CCWFA)

In every region of the country, there are far too many families that do not have access to affordable and high-quality child care. The high price of child care is often one of the largest household expenses for families. The Child Care for Working Families Act (CCWFA) would help ensure more families have access to high-quality, affordable child care, and would expand federal financial investment in child care which currently does not meet existing need.

The CCWFA would lower the cost of child care for families and make care more affordable for those who are most vulnerable. CCWFA importantly recognizes the infrastructure the child care system needs to function and would provide grants to providers to cover start-up, licensure, and quality improvement costs to expand the supply of child care and ensure the child care workforce is paid a living wage. CCWFA would improve access to child care by ensuring that care is available during non-traditional hours, and that more slots are available in high-quality preschool programs for infants and toddlers, and in Head Start programs.

Child Care Aware® of America is proud to support the CCWFA, which has been introduced in every Congress since 2017.

Birth Through Five Child Care and Early Learning Program

- Expands eligibility for child care assistance by removing the income cap. Families at or below 85 percent of State Median Income (SMI) will pay nothing for a child care copayment. The sliding scale gradually increases above 85 percent of SMI and caps payments at 7 percent of family income.
- In-home or family child care providers are included in the legislation's definition of child care providers, with requirements that all providers receiving funds be licensed, participate in the state's tiered system for supporting the quality of child care services (QRIS) if the state has one, or satisfy the requirements for providers described in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Grants are provided to cover start-up, licensure, and quality improvement costs to help establish and strengthen new and existing providers and increase the supply of high-quality.
- Supports higher wages for child care workers by ensuring workers would be paid a living wage and achieve parity with elementary school teachers who have similar credentials and experience and ensuring child care subsidies cover the true cost of providing high-quality care.
- Increases access to child care during non-traditional and extended hours, supports children who are dual-language learners, experiencing homelessness, or in foster care, and creates more inclusive options for children with disabilities.
- If a state chooses not to participate in the Birth to Five Child Care and Early Learning Program, the state will still receive BASE Grants and the Secretary will open funding up to localities, including a city, county, or other local government.

Building an Affordable System for Early Education (BASE) Grants

- Provides base funding to child care providers to support the stability of their programs and enable them to offer high-quality services for families.
- Child care providers, including all types defined in the Child Care and Early Learning Program section of this legislation, will receive grants from the state and must use funds, in part, to increase staff wages and provide cost of living increases and graduated pay increases.
- Funds may also support staff bonuses and benefits, staff professional development, improve the quality of child care, and improve access to inclusive and developmentally appropriate care for children with disabilities.

Universal Preschool Program

- Provides funding to states to establish and expand a mixed-delivery system of high-quality preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds in a variety of settings (including schools, child care programs, and Head Start programs) and supports states in increasing staff wages.
- If a state does not choose to receive funding under this program, the Secretary can provide funds to localities, such as city, county, local government, district, or a Head Start agency.

Head Start Extended Duration and Wages

- Provides funding to ensure all Head Start programs receive the support they need to provide full-day, full-year programming.
- Provides funding to assist Head Start and Early Head Start agencies with supporting wages for staff that are comparable to wages for elementary educators with similar credentials and experience in the state.

Learn more about the CCWFA from the bill's lead sponsors:

- [Senator Patty Murray \(D-WA\)](#)
- [Representative Bobby Scott \(D-VA\)](#)

Together, we are making America child care strong—because that makes everyone stronger.