



## Gladys Soto | California



### Gladys's story

Gladys Soto has experienced the inequity of the availability and affordability of quality child care herself and now advocates for parents to have access to these very programs – something critical in the expensive San Francisco area! She placed her children on waiting lists for child care when they were infants, but only received placement when they were reaching school age and she no longer qualified for subsidies. Despite her increased income, the cost of preschool plus wrap-around services for her two children was still unaffordable, and with the high cost of living in San Francisco she had to pay out of pocket.

Because her son didn't have access to high-quality early education before entering preschool, he was behind two grade levels in reading – something Gladys believes was due to his lack of high-quality child care during his earliest years. This preparation is critical for children as they're developing and getting ready to enter the formal education system. It was only because of Gladys' advocacy on her son's behalf that he was eventually able to get access to the services he needed and get caught up to his peers in reading.

**Child Care Stats in CA**  
**The cost of center care for 2 children in California is more than twice the annual cost of tuition at a four year college.**

**U.S. businesses lose approximately \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of child care breakdowns.**

**There are 1,751,677 children under the age of 6 in California who could be in need of child care.**

### Congressional Request: 2017

CCAOA is requesting a \$1.4 billion increase (over the FY 2016 level) for next year to ensure that nearly 217,000 children and families don't lose access to care, and also to help states meet the requirements of the 2014 CCDBG law.

We ask that you co-sponsor the "Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act of 2017" (H.R. 947/S.337), which would:

- Provide up to 12 weeks of leave for working families
- Enable workers to earn up to 66% of their monthly income while on leave
- Cover workers in all companies, no matter size
- Be administered through the newly created Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave

We also ask that you co-sponsor the "Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act of 2017," which would expand and enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to reflect the realities of modern-day child care costs. The PACE Act would make CDCTC refundable and increase the credit rate, which would greatly benefit millions of working families struggling to pay their monthly bills as child care is the greatest expense after housing.