CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

We ask that Congress increase CCDBG funding by an additional $5 billion in FY2020, in order to help states meet the 2014 requirements and increase the number of children served by the grant.

THE HISTORY OF CCDBG

Established in 1991, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary federal grant program that provides child care assistance for families in need. CCDBG is administered to states in block grants. States use the program to subsidize child care for working families with low incomes. Most of this assistance is administered through vouchers or certificates, which can be used by parents to select the quality provider or program that works best for their family.

Congress reauthorized CCDBG in 2014 with overwhelming bipartisan support. The CCDBG Act of 2014 improved child care health and safety standards and provided funding to help make quality child care available to more families with low incomes. The 2014 law also mandated that states meet new requirements on comprehensive criminal background checks and disaster preparedness and response planning, among other critical improvements.

A JOB NOT FINISHED

Despite the reauthorization, Congress failed to provide sufficient funding to help states make quality child care available to millions of families that need it. Today, states use resources from other federal funding streams, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), to ensure families don’t lose critical access to child care.

The lack of adequate funding has hampered states’ ability to provide quality child care to working families. Currently, only 1 in 6 families who qualify for child care assistance receive it.

States continue to request and receive waivers from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to delay implementation of the new requirements, particularly background checks. Additionally, FY2017 saw the lowest number of children served by the grant in nearly 20 years.

Average Monthly Number of Children Served in CCDBG in the United States (in millions)

Fewer than 1 out of 6 children eligible for CCDF are being served.
**WHY CCDBG MATTERS IN FLORIDA**

In Florida, over 500,000 children are living below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. In FY2017-2018, less than half of these vulnerable children and families received reimbursements for attending an early care and education (ECE) program and an average of 31,000 children were on the waitlist for this 12-month period. Without additional funding, providers will continue to struggle to meet the needs of this at-risk population.

These families also have difficulty paying for high-quality programs. At the current reimbursement levels, high-quality programs cannot accommodate the financial needs of at-risk families without operating at a loss. For instance, a Volusia County high-quality accredited provider receives an average reimbursement of $174.00 weekly for an infant. To sustain a quality program at the highest level, she must charge $239.00 a week to care for an infant. A single parent with an infant that lives at or below the state's poverty level ($16,910/year) will be charged the difference of $65 weekly. It is highly unlikely that this parent can pay 20 percent of her income to have her child in a high-quality ECE program.

High-quality programs maintain rigorous health, safety, and education standards for young children, who all deserve equal access to quality care regardless of their parents' socioeconomic status. Thus, Florida desperately needs more CCDBG funding in order to achieve this.

**HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP IN 2019**

CCDBG remains underfunded, despite the funding increase in FY 2018 of $2.4 billion. While this funding allowed states to begin the intense work of revising their child care systems to help thousands of children and families gain access to high-quality care, it did not fully meet the critical need for high-quality child care.

In fact, even with CCDBG’s historic increase, federal funding for child care is still $1 billion less than FY2001 levels, when adjusted for inflation.

Given the population growth since 2001, it is clear that states still do not have enough funding to meet the needs of families.

For this reason, we ask that Congress increase CCDBG funding by an additional $5 billion in FY2020. This will help states meet the 2014 requirements and increase the number of children served.