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.

The average monthly number of children served in CCDBG in the United States (in millions) is shown in the graph. Fewer than 1 out of 6 children eligible for CCDF are being served.
WHY CCDBG MATTERS IN LOUISIANA

To ensure children are prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond, the Louisiana legislature passed the Early Childhood Education Act in 2012. This legislation created a statewide system with unified expectations for knowledge and practice for early care and learning and improved access to quality options for families. As a result, Louisiana is seeing an increase in the quality of early childhood classroom interactions. To further advance these efforts, in 2018 the legislature established the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission to build upon the system's strengths and develop a plan to address current gaps.

The Louisiana poverty rate is nearly 20 percent, ranking 49th nationally. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2018 Kids Count Data Book also ranks Louisiana 49th for overall child well-being. Two-thirds of Louisiana children under age five have both parents, or their single parent, working. However, due to inadequate funding, the current child care system cannot meet these parents' needs. Fewer than 7 percent of in-need children aged two and under, and fewer than 33 percent of three-year-olds, can access quality child care in Louisiana. Furthermore, Louisiana's economy has lost $1.1 billion annually due to employee absences related to unavailability of child care.

This gap in access to quality child care negatively impacts children’s learning and their families’ participation in Louisiana’s workforce. Increased CCDBG funding is needed to enable Louisiana to increase the availability and quality of open child care slots and increase the subsidy rates to ensure working families can afford to access quality care.

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.