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.

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

Oregon is in a child care crisis that can only be addressed through additional investments. According to a study by the Center for American Progress, Oregon is a child care desert, or a location where there are more than three children per licensed, available child care opening. Infant-toddler care in Oregon is even more scarce, with 6.8 children per opening. Additionally, Oregon’s child care assistance program has among the highest parent co-pays in the nation, leaving families with low incomes spending as much as 30 percent of their income on child care and only serves 16 percent of eligible families.

Economic competitiveness and gender equality are undermined when families experience a lack of affordable, reliable, and quality child care. Economic competitiveness is weakened when employers experience reduced attendance, productivity and retention due to employees’ child care challenges. And because mothers have traditionally borne a greater burden of child care responsibilities, lack of access causes women to be disproportionately forced out of the workforce.

With additional discretionary funds Oregon could:

- Reduce parent co-payments to no more than 7 percent of a family’s income.
- Increase child care subsidy rates to centers, creating access to more choices for families with low incomes.
- Be used to invest in Baby Promise to create safe, high-quality child care openings for infants and toddlers.
- Reduce the ratio of child care licensing specialists to facility. Currently, Oregon employs one specialist for every 138 providers, even though experts recommend one for every 50 child care facilities.

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.