



May 7, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

The Legislative Women's Caucus remains wholeheartedly committed to ensuring a one billion dollar investment in child care in the upcoming budget. California families are desperately trying to balance work and family life. When parents cannot find or afford child care, the economy loses valuable workers and children miss opportunities to learn. The achievement gap in California has been well documented and is often referenced by leaders like you.

In a very real sense, child care keeps California working and children learning.

While we have made gains in supporting the workforce, families still struggle to access the child care that meets their needs. A recent report estimated that six out of seven children eligible for subsidized child care in California did not receive services from state programs; the estimated number of children eligible for subsidized childcare is 1,479,000.¹ We cannot ignore the fact that there is an 85 percent unmet need for subsidized child care for California families. While we might not meet all the need this year, we owe it to developing kids, their working parents, and our status as the 5th largest economy in the world to do our best.

Specifically, we believe the structure of the upcoming budget should address the lack of child care slots that exist for families in need via the Alternative Payment (AP) and General Child Care Program. AP child care has the most flexibility to meet the needs of the state's working parents, who often work non-traditional hours. An increase of AP childcare is paramount to addressing the crisis we face today. General Child Care also has capacity to absorb the need.

Secondly, it is critical that we ensure rate increases for our most vulnerable populations. Increasing both the infant and toddler rates, as well as addressing the rates for special needs children, allows the providers who do this important work to remain viable and persist in a workforce that desperately needs them.

¹ <http://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/1-2-million-california-children-eligible-subsidized-child-care-not-receive-services-state-programs-2015/>

In addition, as part of the billion dollar investment, we urge that the 236 million dollars coming from the federal government for the Child Care Development Block Grant² also be used to increase access for families in need.

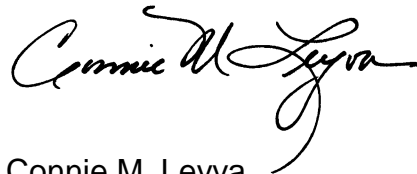
As a caucus, we are united in the fight for our current workforce and the next generation of California's workers and leaders. We have done well in years past. We have used a collaborative and thoughtful approach. It is through this approach that we were able to see incremental changes; changes that will positively impact the predominantly female workforce that delivers care to our children, the families who remain working and the children who benefit now. We have fought for rate increases that reflected the current cost of doing business in California, we have worked for continuity of care in updated eligibility standards, but we must continue this united fight to allow greater access for families to stay in the workforce while their children can thrive in quality, caring environments.

We cannot grow this next generation without a greater investment in childcare.

Respectfully,



Susan Talamantes Eggman
Acting Interim Chair
Assemblywoman, 13th District



Connie M. Leyva
Vice Chair
Senator, 20th District

Cc: Members, California Legislative Women's Caucus
Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins
Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
Senator Holly J. Mitchell, Chair, Senate Budget Committee
Assemblymember Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

² <https://edsource.org/2018/california-to-get-huge-boost-in-child-care-funds-from-federal-budget/596092>