



April 29, 2021

Honorable Phil Ting, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair
Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Kevin McCarty, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable John Laird, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: 2021-2022 Budget Request

Dear Budget Committee and Budget Subcommittee Chairs:

More than two million women have disproportionately left the national labor market entirely since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the month of December alone, women, specifically women of color, accounted for **all** of the nation's job losses. This pandemic has shattered decades of progress improving women's participation rates in the workforce, lowering them to mid-1980s levels.

Many women who left jobs did so because of caregiving duties, many others because the job they held was eliminated. We must act boldly to ensure that, post pandemic; neither caregiving responsibilities nor the loss of a job holds back the economic progress of California women, especially low-income women of color. For women to confidently return to the workforce we must secure safe, nurturing, stable child care and provide targeted training and job re-entry services.

The Legislative Women's Caucus is requesting that our top budget priority to appropriate \$2 billion for child care be funded. Specifically, we are requesting these funds to expand the number of children served by 200,000, implement child care reimbursement rate reform, waive family fees for all families, and modernize the administration of child care programs.

California is a diverse state with diverse child care needs, as such; we need to ensure that our expansion of slots has diversity of care providers and targets kids from 0-12. We must simultaneously increase **both** provider rates and the number of child care spaces as well as waiving the fees on low-income families.

While it is widely accepted that child care is a critical need that not only supports parents' ability to work but also is additionally essential to healthy child development, child care providers, who are dominantly women and women of color, remain underpaid

and undervalued. Our budget request is structured to address both the underpayment of this essential workforce and the chronic shortage of child care spaces. The funds requested are a necessary, essential and critical step to pave the way for a strong economic recovery for California and a more equitable future for women, our children and families.

Additionally, the Caucus is requesting a one-time appropriation of \$310 million, over three years, for targeted job training for women. Many female-dominated job categories will not return to pre-pandemic levels, forcing many to seek new fields of employment. Without employment re-training and job-placement services, women will be undermined in their reentry to the workforce, as will the economic security of their families and their communities.

The funds requested include \$20 million to increase women's employment in apprenticeship programs and nontraditional occupations by providing grants to labor and community-based workforce training organizations. Another \$275 million would fund child care provider apprenticeship programs and elder care training. The final \$15 million would fund the Department of Social Services CalFresh Employment and Training Program for safety net beneficiaries, the large majority of whom are women and families.

We urge your support for women in the workforce, through quality, affordable and available child care and targeted job-training programs that lift women's economic status. Nothing less than California's strong economic recovery and an equitable future for women and children is at stake. The bipartisan and bicameral Legislative Women's Caucus stands united in its commitment to securing a substantial investment that supports the advancement of all women.

Sincerely,



Cristina Garcia, Chair
Assemblywoman, 58th District

CC: Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor
Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker of the Assembly
Honorable Toni G. Atkins, Senate President pro Tempore