

MASSACHUSETTS
Business Coalition
FOR Early Childhood
Education

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker
House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

March 4, 2021

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Schumer, House Minority Leader McCarthy, and Senate Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education (ECE), we respectfully urge your support for a significant and vital investment in the nation's childcare system to help stabilize and energize the economy. Specifically, we request that you help ensure families have access to the affordable, reliable, high-quality early learning opportunities necessary to support the United States workforce by including **\$39 billion to childcare providers through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program as well as an additional \$1 billion for the Head Start program** in the final FY21 Budget Reconciliation Bill.

The Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education is a growing coalition of more than 70 Massachusetts businesses employing nearly 180,000 Massachusetts workers. We launched earlier this month in urgent recognition that the child care sector is in crisis and failing to meet the needs of our children, parents, communities, and economy.

Early childhood education programs were struggling mightily in Massachusetts and the challenges are being deeply exacerbated by the pandemic according to data from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. ECE programs decreased by 25% over the decade preceding the pandemic. Since COVID-19, only 82% of ECE programs have reopened. All of this is contributing to a lack of accessible, affordable, quality, and reliable ECE for all families, and especially harsh circumstances for families of color and women in the workforce.

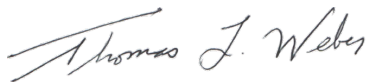
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Massachusetts families and employers deeply worried. According to a poll of Massachusetts families conducted in the Fall of 2020 by Beacon Research, 79% of parents are concerned they will not be able to work and 76% are concerned that the quality of their work will suffer without formal care arrangements. In a separate survey of more than 400 Massachusetts businesses conducted in the Fall, 91% of employers surveyed report significant or some concern expressed by employees about child care and school issues, while 76% report that the employment stability and career growth opportunities of women, in particular, either have already been compromised by interruptions and gaps in child care or schooling, or they are concerned about this issue. As a result, growing deficiencies and inequities in early childhood development programming are compounding economic losses that ReadyNation, a leading national group of CEOs and business leaders focused on ECE, already estimated costs the United States \$57 billion annually before the pandemic.

Early child care and education is essential infrastructure, as important to the workforce and economy as roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals. We respectfully submit that the immediate and substantial investment of \$40 billion proposed by the House Committee on Education and Labor is the right thing to do by our children and communities as well as the smart thing to do by our workers and economy.

We thank you for your consideration of our request, and would be happy to provide additional information. Please do not hesitate to contact our coalition executive director, Tom Weber, at t.weber@easternbank.com or visit our [website](#) to learn more about our coalition and membership.

Sincerely,



Thomas L. Weber
Executive Director
Massachusetts Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education

Cc: Massachusetts Congressional Delegation