



April 8, 2026

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
Washington, DC 20510

CC: Senator Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member  
Senator Rand Paul  
Senator Susan Collins  
Senator Lisa Murkowski  
Senator Roger Marshall  
Senator Tim Scott  
Senator Josh Hawley  
Senator Tommy Tuberville  
Senator Jim Banks  
Senator Jon Husted  
Senator Ashley Moody  
Senator Alan Armstrong  
Senator Patty Murray  
Senator Chris Murphy  
Senator Maggie Hassan  
Senator Ed Markey  
Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Senator Tammy Baldwin  
Senator Tim Kaine  
Senator John Hickenlooper  
Senator Andy Kim  
Senator Angela Alsobrooks

Dear Senator Cassidy,

We the undersigned organizations, led by the Child Care for Every Family Network with the support of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Women's Law Center, the Center for Law and Social Policy, and the National Association of Family Child Care, express our strong opposition to the Cassidy "discussion draft" that amends the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

This "discussion draft" has numerous provisions that:

- will harm the children and families the program is designed to serve,
- will make it harder for child care programs to stay in business and serve their communities,
- includes burdensome unneeded requirements on states that will divert funds that are better spent serving families, and
- gives the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services unprecedented power to penalize states and withhold all federal child care funding from states for their administrative errors.

Though described as an “anti-fraud” package, the “discussion draft” proposal comprehensively revises the Child Care and Development Block Grant program, rolling back long-standing child care policies important to child development, family economic well-being, and provider stability and supply. In short, this bill will harm the families participating in this vital program, result in fewer families receiving child care assistance from the program and fewer child care providers willing to serve families with child care subsidies, and will further destabilize America’s child care sector that is already stretched too thin. We encourage you to withdraw this discussion draft and instead focus on child care solutions that meaningfully address America’s child care crisis for families and providers.

The discussion draft includes several provisions that are particularly harmful to children, families, and child care providers. This includes:

1. The prohibition on enrollment-based payments, which will hurt the child care sector, weaken provider stability, reduce families' child care options, and may lead to higher child care prices across the nation;
2. Prohibiting timely payments to providers, which will limit provider participation in the subsidy program, make running a child care business more challenging, and reduce families’ child care options;
3. Reducing child eligibility to 6 months from the current 12 month minimum, which is harmful to child development, disruptive to families economic stability, and unnecessarily costly and burdensome for states which will divert funds better used for serving families;
4. Requiring electronic tools for attendance verification, which will be costly and burdensome for providers, is an unnecessary surveillance measure, and will lead some to stop serving families with subsidies and place others at risk of closing;
5. Excluding U.S. citizen children with immigrant parents;
6. Removing states’ flexibility to use presumptive eligibility, which can lead to parents missing out on employment opportunities and makes accessing care even harder for families;
7. Creating unprecedented new power for HHS to freeze all state funding because of state administrative errors, needlessly placing families and a state's child care sector at risk and in disarray;
8. Creating a database of prohibited providers without clear due process or fair standards;
9. Singling out CCDBG as a higher-risk program than other federal government programs despite no evidence of significant or widespread fraud.

Right now, millions of families are struggling to find and afford child care while child care providers struggle to keep their doors open and child care workers are among the lowest-paid workers in our the United States. Child care costs have been rising faster than inflation for years and squeezing family budgets. In most states, child care costs more than rent or in-state tuition at a public four-year university, making it one of the largest expenses families with young children face. The latest [annual survey report](#) from the National Association for Family Child Care reveals an unsustainable situation: 35% reported earning less than \$10 an hour despite 71% working 50 or more hours per week, and 48% reported working 60 or more hours per week. A [recent survey](#) of providers by the National Association for the Education of Young Children makes clear that insufficient public investment threatens parents' ability to afford and access child care.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant is one of the most closely monitored human services programs, with states required to submit detailed plans, track eligibility, conduct regular provider inspections, conduct annual audits, and report spending to the federal government. There is no evidence of significant or widespread fraud in the federal child care program, but there is no question families across the country are struggling to access and afford child care because of inadequate public investment.

In short, this discussion draft risks denying support to children and families and increasing costs and burdens to child care providers, making it harder for them to serve families with subsidies and private-pay families, while doing nothing to strengthen our child care system. Therefore, we oppose this "discussion draft" and encourage Congress to seek solutions that address the child care crisis impacting families and child care providers nationwide, including the robust resources necessary to do so.

Signed,

**National Organizations**

Child Care for Every Family Network  
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
National Women's Law Center (NWLC)  
MomsRising

**All Our Kin**

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
Care in Action  
Caring Across Generations  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Funding Project  
Children's HealthWatch  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Region  
Early Learning Policy Group

Equal Rights Advocates  
Family Centered Treatment Foundation  
Family Values @ Work  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Food Research & Action Center (FRAC)  
Head Start Child & Family Development Centers, Inc.  
Home Grown  
Indigenous Visioning  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
Justice + Joy National Collaborative  
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)  
Legal Voice  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Child Care Association  
National Domestic Workers Alliance  
National Indian Child Care Association  
National Organization for Women  
National Respite Coalition  
National Women's Political Caucus  
Poder Latinx  
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)  
Public Citizen  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
TOOTRiS  
UMOS  
Vote Mama Lobby  
ZERO TO THREE

### **State and Local Organizations**

#### **Alabama**

Alabama Institute for Social Justice

#### **Alaska**

Alaska Children's Trust

All Alaska Pediatric Partnership (A2P2)

Southeast Childhood Collective

#### **Arizona**

Southwest Human Development

Children's Action Alliance

#### **Arkansas**

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

#### **California**

Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network

Black Californians Unite for Early Care and Education

California Child Care Resource & Referral Network

Child Care Law Center

Community Action Partnership of Madera County (CAPMC)  
Early Edge California  
Parent Voices California  
The Children's Partnership

**Colorado**

Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (COAEYC)  
The Colorado Children's Campaign

**Connecticut**

Connecticut Voices for Children

**Delaware**

Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children

**District of Columbia**

DC Action  
SPACES In Action

**Florida**

Primrose School of Miramar  
Small World Daycare & Learning Center  
West Broward High-Early Learning Academy

**Georgia**

Black Child Development Institute (BCDI) - Atlanta  
Easter Seals North Georgia, Inc.  
Georgia Child Care Association  
Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network  
Helping Mamas  
Tri-County Family Connection  
Voices for Georgia's Children

**Hawaii**

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!  
PATCH

**Idaho**

Idaho Head Start Association

**Illinois**

COFI - Community Organizing and Family Issues  
Illinois Head Start Association  
SEIU Healthcare Illinois Indiana Missouri Kansas  
Workers Center for Racial Justice

**Indiana**

Indiana Head Start Association  
Little Giants Preschool

**Iowa**

Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children

**Kansas**

Futures First

**Kentucky**

Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence

**Louisiana**

For Providers By Providers (4PXP)

**Maine**

Maine Association for the Education of Young Children (MaineAEYC)

Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition

Maine People's Alliance

Seedlings to Sunflowers

**Maryland**

Latino Child Care Association of Maryland, Inc.

Maryland Family Network

**Massachusetts**

Community Labor United Inc.

Massachusetts Head Start Association

Strategies for Children

**Michigan**

Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children

Michigan League for Public Policy

**Minnesota**

All Nations Rise

Gender Justice

**Mississippi**

Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiative

**Missouri**

Missouri Head Start Association

Missouri Association for the Education of Young Children

Region VII Head Start Association

Rhizome: Early Childhood Strategy & Policy Solutions

WEPOWER

**Montana**

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies - The Montana Coalition

Montana Advocates for Children

Montana Association for the Education of Young Children

Montana Budget & Policy Center

Zero to Five Montana

**Nebraska**

IBBG - I Be Black Girl

**Nevada**

Children's Advocacy Alliance

**New Hampshire**

Kids First Consulting

**New Jersey**

Advocates for Children of New Jersey

New Jersey Citizen Action

NJ Communities United

**New Mexico**

OLÉ Education Fund

**New York**

Alliance for Quality Education  
Brenda Ferguson's Daycare  
Children's Defense Fund - New York  
Citizen Action of New York  
Diverse Mosaic Community Center  
Harlem Road Children's Center, Inc.  
Lake Shore Family Center  
Milly's Wiggles and Giggles Daycare  
Miracle Day Care  
New York Association for the Education of Young Children  
Storytime Child Care Inc.  
The Children's Agenda  
Tisha's Tots Family Daycare  
Western New York Child Care Action Team

**North Carolina**

Education Justice Alliance

**North Dakota**

North Dakota KIDS COUNT

**Ohio**

Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children  
Ohio Organizing Collaborative  
Southwest Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

**Oklahoma**

Oklahoma Association for the Education of Young Children

**Oregon**

Children's Institute  
For All Families Oregon

**Pennsylvania**

Children First (PA)  
First Up  
New Voices for Reproductive Justice  
Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children  
Pennsylvania Head Start Association  
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

**Rhode Island**

Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children

**South Carolina**

Institute for Child Success  
South Carolina Program for Infant/Toddler Care

**South Dakota**

South Dakota KIDS COUNT

**Tennessee**

Nashville Area Association for the Education of Young Children

**Texas**

Children at Risk

**Utah**

Utah Association for the Education of Young Children  
Voices for Utah Children

**Vermont**

Building Bright Futures, Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council  
Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children  
Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

**Virginia**

Legacy-House Preschool  
Virginia Head Start Association  
Virginia Organizing

**Washington**

Akin  
Children's Campaign Fund  
Washington State Association of Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance  
Program

**West Virginia**

Miss Tiffany's School for Young

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Wisconsin Head Start Association

**Wyoming**

Wyoming Community Foundation