

National Association for the Education of Young Children

1313 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4101

202-232-8777 800-424-2460

Fax 202-328-1846

www.naeyc.org

February 27, 2014

Dear Senator:

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a leading voice for high quality early childhood education and the nation's largest association of early childhood education professionals, is pleased that the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is being reauthorized with bipartisan support. High-quality child care is an economic and educational driver, helping families work, young children be nurtured and prepared for school, and older children have safe, enriching experiences after school hours.

NAEYC first set voluntary national standards of program quality in the mid-1980s to raise awareness of and progress for providers toward high-quality learning and development for young children. Our national professional preparation standards are used to guide and accredit programs preparing teachers of children birth through age eight. As the standard setters of program quality, we recognize that far too many eligible children are not receiving the financial support that would make it possible for their families to select high-quality providers. Child care providers receive far less reimbursement for services than the actual cost of quality. CCDBG is an important mechanism, and if financed properly, can ensure young children are safe while their parents work and that they are in high-quality programs preparing them for their academic success. Tackling both access and quality simultaneously is essential.

We believe that this legislation (S. 1086) acts on the significant research that has demonstrated the benefits of high-quality early learning. However, these improvements will require significant additional investments. According to a new report by the Center for Law and Social Policy, approximately 260,000 fewer children received child care assistance through CCDBG in 2012 than did in 2006. The current appropriation and mandatory funding levels remain below the 2009 stimulus level. As this legislation advances, we urge Congress to attend to the funding levels that will prevent state and local tradeoffs between access and quality when both are critical to young children's and families' success.

Sincerely,



Rhian Evans Allvin
Executive Director