

IGNITING POSSIBILITIES PROMOTING INNOVATION

A Child Care Agenda for Congress, the Administration, and States:
2018 – 2019 Policy Platform

CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT OF 2017

On September 14, 2017, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA) introduced the “Child Care for Working Families Act of 2017.”

Child care plays an important role in the U.S. economy, helping to generate 15 million jobs and more than \$500 billion in income annually. Families need child care so they can work and children need a safe place where they can learn and continue their healthy development. Unfortunately, far too many low-income families do not have access to high-quality care, or they cannot afford it. Over the past decade, there has been little relief for families struggling to pay the high cost of child care in the United States, which has forced parents to make difficult decisions about investing in care or being employed. On average, millions of working families pay more for child care than they would for a mortgage/rent, transportation needs, or food every month.

The Child Care for Working Families Act would ensure low-income families pay no more than seven percent of their annual income on child care; and would also help young children gain access to preschool, and better support the child care workforce. It would also help provide the necessary resources to establish and/or expand the child care resource and referral networks.

The bill would also:

- Create a federal-state child care partnership for children from birth through age 13.
- More than double the number of children eligible for assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and ensure these children gain access to high-quality early learning programs.

- Help states create universal preschool programs for three- and four-year olds during the school day, and provide a higher matching rate for infants and toddlers.
- Support the child care workforce through increased training and compensation by ensuring they are paid a living wage.
- Establish provider payment levels that reflect higher wages and provide investment for scholarships.
- Improve the quality of care in home-based, family, and neighbor settings, and during non-traditional working hours to support families.
- Address the functional and access needs of children with disabilities (including infants and toddlers) in child care settings by increasing funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA.)
- Help Head Start provide full-day, full-year programming.

Under this bill, eligible families are households that do not exceed 150 percent of a state median income, which is then gradually reduced through 2020. If enacted into law, over \$100 billion would be authorized in the first three years.

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