



The Honorable Joseph Biden
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Biden:

The Children's Leadership Council (CLC), a coalition of nearly 60 leading national child advocacy groups, strongly supports the initiatives proposed by the Middle Class Task Force and included in the President's FY 2011 budget to expand the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and to increase direct expenditures for child care subsidies for working families with low incomes. These initiatives will ensure greater access to quality child care for working families.

It is in the nation's economic interest that America's families have access to quality child care. Two-thirds of families with children are headed by two working parents or a single working parent. All too often, these working families must choose between quality child care and other necessities such as safe housing and healthy food.

Quality child care provides children with the tools necessary to succeed in school, work and life. Research has shown that young children with access to quality care gain critical social and educational skills that last a lifetime. These skills range from the ability to build and maintain positive relationships with peers, to early competence in math and reading.

An expanded federal investment in child care strengthens the economy in many ways. Parents able to afford child care can stay at work, add hours, and/or leave the unemployment rolls for a new job. Parents and relative caregivers will be able to accept a position with the knowledge that their children will be well cared for and given a solid foundation upon which to build future successes. More child care funding also invests in more jobs or hours for child care teachers and other staff.

The Children's Leadership Council applauds the Middle Class Task Force for recommending much-needed expansions adopted in the President's budget: an increase in direct child care assistance to serve 235,000 more children and as much as a \$900 increase in the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit for middle class families. These proposals will expand access to quality child care for millions of American families. We look forward to working with you to make access to quality child care a reality for all of America's children.

With Regards,

Matthew Melmed

Chair, Children's Leadership Council



February 25, 2010

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Biden:

The First Five Years Fund strongly supports the proposal by the Middle Class Task Force to expand support for high-quality child care. We appreciate the unprecedented expansion of support for children and families through the Child and Dependant Care Tax Credit and the Child Care Development Fund. We applaud your recognition of the important role that high quality child care plays in our nation's current and future economic success.

Especially in challenging financial times, working families struggle to afford high-quality child care. The initiatives of the Obama-Biden Administration will provide essential support to families who need child care in order to keep their jobs or find a new job. Under this proposal, today's workforce gains by knowing their children are safe while parents work. The workforce of the future gains as well. Research clearly shows that high quality early childhood experiences provide children with a foundation for success later in life; starting them on the path to be productive citizens and to contribute to America's economy. Every dollar invested in high quality early childhood development yields up to \$10 in long-term benefits. With such a high return on investment, increased funding for high-quality early childhood programs is a wise choice.

The increased investment of \$1.6 billion in the Child Care Development Fund will provide 235,000 additional children with access to high-quality care. The doubling of the Child and Dependant Care Tax Credit will help more working families pay for the high cost of care. As child care costs take up a large percentage of shrinking household budgets, both of these proposals will provide needed assistance to many families.

The First Five Years Fund thanks you for your support for children and families. We look forward to working with you to see these important policies implemented.

Sincerely,

Cornelia Grumman
Executive Director
First Five Years Fund

February 25, 2010

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Biden:

The National Women's Law Center applauds the Middle Class Task Force for recognizing the importance of child care assistance for working families struggling to ensure that their children receive the high-quality care they need.

In these challenging economic times, it is particularly important to help families afford stable child care, which enables parents to get and keep a job. Expanding the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit for middle-income families recognizes the growing child care costs that these families face. The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, which is not indexed for inflation, has not been increased since 2001.

The proposal to increase the Child Care and Development Block Grant by \$1.6 billion will help address the particular challenges that low-income families face. Due to funding that remained stagnant until recently, there are significant and longstanding gaps in the affordability and quality of our child care system. For example, only about one in seven children eligible for federal child care assistance receives help. In half of the states, eligibility to qualify for help in paying for child care in 2009 was lower as a percentage of poverty than in 2001. In many states, payment rates to providers serving children receiving child care assistance are far too low to support good-quality care.

Increased investments in child care are essential to help the many families grappling with financial and other strains in the current economy. Child care is a basic that helps families get ahead by giving parents the support and peace of mind they need to be productive at work. And child care helps our nation stay competitive with a stronger work force now and in the future. The help with child care expenses that would be provided to families under your Task Force's proposal is sorely needed and much appreciated.

Sincerely,



Nancy Duff Campbell
Co-President



February 23, 2010

The Honorable Joe Biden
Vice President at the White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Biden:

The American economy cannot function efficiently without quality child care. For millions of families such care is either unavailable or unaffordable. As a consequence, millions of children are in sub-standard care and not receiving the full benefit of an early learning opportunity.

Child care is not a luxury for children, parents, and employers. Children in quality programs receive educational and social benefits that endure for life, and they are in safe environments while parents work.

The Every Child Matters Education Fund strongly supports the initiatives in the recommendations of the Middle Class Task Force. We particularly appreciate the proposal to nearly double the Child Care Tax Credit for families making under \$85,000 a year, and an increase in the credit for families earning up to \$115,000 a year.

This credit is important for these middle-class families since child care costs are typically higher than what households spend on food, and care for two children often exceeds average rent costs. In 43 states, attendance at a public university for a year is less than the cost of placing an infant in child care.

The Every Child Matters Education Fund looks forward to working with your office and other groups to help millions of children and families afford safe and high-quality care for their children.

With Regards,

Michael Petit, President
The Every Child Matters Education Fund:



February 24, 2010

The Honorable Joseph Biden
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

Voices for America's Children (Voices), the nation's largest network of multi-issue child advocacy organizations, enthusiastically endorses the proposals made by the President Obama's Middle Class Task Force to expand and make child care more affordable for American families. We applaud your work and attention to this critical need.

As you know, American families are struggling even harder in face of the current economic downturn to balance family care and work. Child care is not a luxury for middle-class families; it is a necessity that enables total family income to meet the cost of living.

Furthermore, affording child care, and finding quality child care providers, is even more difficult for low-income Americans. The Child Care and Dependent Block Grant (CCDBG) and Child and Dependent Care Tax Credits (CDCTC) programs are critical supports that provide a helping hand. The cost of child care has grown much faster than median family incomes since 2000. Today, more than two-thirds of families are headed by a single working parent or two working parents. For low-income workers, child care costs often are higher than rent or other monthly expenses.

Voices is also pleased to see that the president's recent FY2011 federal budget included proposals consistent with the recommendations of the Middle Class Task Force; specifically, the call for doubling the tax credit for families making less than \$85,000 provided by the CDCTC and \$1.6 billion in additional funding for the CCDBG program.

While Voices will continue to advocate for further tax breaks for child care and a much greater increase in yearly funding for CCDBG, the president's proposals are a strong basis on which to continue to build in the future.

Thank you for speaking up for children. Voices for America's Children looks forward to working with you to improve the lives of children and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William H. Bentley", written in a cursive style.

William H. Bentley, MSW
President and CEO



Early Care and Education Consortium

1313 L Street NW, Suite 120, Washington, DC 20005
Phone (202) 408-9626 www.ececonsortium.org

February 25, 2010

Vice President Joseph Biden
The White House
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Vice President Biden:

The Early Care and Education Consortium strongly supports the Middle Class Task Force proposals to help working families with their child care expenses.

The Early Care and Education Consortium is an alliance of the nation's leading national, regional and independent providers of high-quality early care and learning programs. Consortium members operate nearly 9,000 licensed centers caring for and educating approximately 800,000 children across the country. Our members offer full-day/full-year programs for children birth through age 12, state-funded prekindergarten, before- and after-school programs, extended day, and summer programs with enrollments that reflect the rich diversity of our communities and nation.

We applaud the proposals to increase the investment in the Child Care and Development Block Grant by \$1.6 billion and to nearly double the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. Helping working families with their child care expenses – through subsidies for low-income families and tax credits that can help virtually all families – is an important way Washington can ease the impact of the current economy on the middle class and those who aspire to it.

Currently, only 1 in 7 eligible children can access child care subsidies because of lack of funding. The CCDBG investment also helps child care providers through reimbursement rates and initiatives that support the costs of high-quality care. For our parents, and many staff, who benefit from the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, an expansion of that credit promises to help working families offset some of the costs of child care. In short, investments in CCDBG and the child care tax credit create possibilities for middle America and ease the strains on working families.

The simple fact is, parents can't work without child care, and early learning opportunities matter to young children. Thank you for acknowledging this by including these bold proposals in the Middle Class Task Force's recommendations to the President and in the FY11 Budget Resolution. These measures will not only help families, but will support our national economic recovery and lay the foundation for the middle class of the future.

We look forward to working with you to move this significant new investment forward in Congress.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Karolak".

Eric J. Karolak, Ph.D.
Executive Director



National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

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Executive Director

Matthew E. Melmed

February 24, 2010

Mr. Joseph Biden
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

On behalf of ZERO TO THREE and the babies of America, I would like to thank you and the entire Middle Class Task Force for the support you have shown for our nation's infants, toddlers, and their families. In these challenging economic times, providing additional resources for families with very young children is a clear recognition of the importance of these services to the future of our families, our workforce, and our nation.

We are especially grateful for the proposed \$1.6 billion increase for child care, including additional funding for improving the quality of infant-toddler child care. This increased funding will help meet the needs of families currently struggling to find and keep quality care for their children while they seek or maintain employment. In addition, the Task Force proposal to expand the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit will help more middle-income families meet the high costs of child care. This is particularly important for families with infants and toddlers because the cost of care for the youngest of children is even greater.

Research has demonstrated that high quality care is associated with positive outcomes that all parents want for their children, ranging from cooperation with adults to the ability to initiate and sustain positive exchanges with peers, to early competence in math and reading – all key ingredients to later school success. Child care is a critical component of our early learning system because it provides nurturance and support for early learning and language development, preparation for school, access to supplemental services such as developmental screening, and support for working parents.

Thank you for your support on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely,

Matthew Melmed
Executive Director

National Association for the Education of Young Children

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February 23, 2010

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Vice President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President,

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading voice for early childhood educators working with and on behalf of children from birth through third grade, is very pleased that the President's fiscal year 2011 budget requests include the Middle Class Tax Force proposals to improve access to and the quality of early childhood education.

The Middle Class Task Force proposals for an additional \$1.6 billion investment in Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for low income families and the expansion of the tax credit for middle class families turns the country in the right direction and will alleviate the burden on working families of balancing high-quality child care with other basic family expenses.

In addition, NAEYC believes that the Early Learning Challenge Fund, together with additional resources for Head Start and Early Head Start and a reauthorization of the CCDBG, will lead to more high-quality early learning experiences for young children that will prepare them for success in school, work, and life.

NAEYC will continue to urge Congress to adopt these proposals that will help Americans prosper and reach their potential.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Ginsberg, Ph.D.
Executive Director



FIRST FOCUS

MAKING CHILDREN & FAMILIES THE PRIORITY

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February 23, 2010

Vice President Joe Biden
Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Vice President Biden:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to express our strong support for the substantial investments in America's middle class families that were recommended by the Middle Class Task Force. We are pleased that you have made policy recommendations that will aid families struggling to pay for high quality child care, including a significant increase in child care funding for low-income families as well as an expansion of the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC).

You are to be commended on the proposed \$1.6 billion increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) which would represent the largest one-year increase in federal child care funding in two decades. High-quality child care builds a foundation for the healthy development of young children, and ensures they have what they need to reach their full potential. These funds would further enhance the capacity of high quality child care programs, serving an additional 235,000 children living in low- to moderate-income families. In short, this additional money will help families struggling to join the middle class reach that goal.

In addition, the proposed increase in the CDCTC significantly expands access for moderate income families. This is a critical support that will go far toward helping working parents defray the high cost of care for their young children. We applaud your recognition of the importance of this program though we do hope it is a first step toward a fully refundable tax credit that would also benefit our most vulnerable families. As you may know, a refundable CDCTC would benefit an additional 7.4 million American families who need to pay for child care, but whose modest incomes do not provide them with a federal income tax payment to reduce.

Your task force has proposed policy solutions that will go far toward addressing the serious challenges facing the nation's middle class families. We are pleased to see your attention to the soaring costs of high-quality child care and your notable effort to provide support to struggling working families. As you know, these initiatives are critical to the American middle class and the overall economy.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley
President



National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

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February 23, 2010

Vice President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. Vice President:

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) strongly supports the Administration's proposals to expand the Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) and increased funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) by \$1.6 billion next year.

Over 11 million children are in some type of child care setting every week. According to NACCRRRA's most recent 2008 information, the average annual cost of child care for an infant in a child care center ranged from \$4,600 to \$15,900 and for a 4-year-old from \$4,000 to \$11,700. For an infant in a family child care home, the average cost ranged from \$3,600 to \$10,300 and for 4-year-olds it ranged from \$3,380 to \$9,800. Across the nation, child care is hard to find, harder to afford, and of dubious quality. The fact is that many families struggle with the cost of child care, not just low income families.

About 6.1 million families currently claim the child care tax credit. The Administration's proposal would help make child care more affordable for over 4 million families. This will provide many working families with much needed financial relief during the current economic downturn. In addition, the proposed increase in CCDBG, would assist an estimated 235,000 more children and enable states to be able to invest in improving the quality of child care to ensure that children are safe, in a setting that promotes their healthy development and prepares them for school.

In NACCRRRA's national parent poll, overwhelmingly, the top two concerns of parents were about quality and cost of child care. Families need help affording child care and states need help in improving the quality of child care. The Administration's proposal addresses both concerns and NACCRRRA commends the President and the Vice President for choosing to invest in child care as part of the FY2011 budget.

If we can be helpful in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda K. Smith".

Linda K. Smith
Executive Director