

THE CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT (S. 1806/ H.R.3773)

BACKGROUND

- Child care and early education programs are a vital support for women in the workforce, many of whom are a primary source of financial support for their families. **Half of all households in the U.S. with children under age 18 have a breadwinner mother** who is either a single mother who heads a household, or a married mother who provides at least 40 percent of a family's earnings.ⁱ
- A lack of reliable, high quality, affordable child care and early learning programs undermine women's success in the workforce. This challenge is particularly acute for women of color. **Two-thirds of low-wage workers are women, nearly half of whom are women of color.**ⁱⁱ Thirty percent of low-wage female workers are supporting children.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Far too few low- and moderate-income families, particularly families of color, receive the financial assistance they are eligible for to help cover the cost of child care. Federal funding through the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the primary vehicle for assisting low- and moderate-income working families in securing needed child care, has not kept pace with growing populations of young children. Moreover, inadequate funding for Head Start and Early Head Start leaves affordable, quality child care and early learning programs out of reach for many working families.
- The payment rates for providers who accept families receiving assistance are set too low to support high-quality child care and early learning services. Only one state set its rate at the federally recommended level in 2016.¹ Low rates make it difficult for providers to hire and retain well-qualified staff, purchase toys and books, maintain their facilities, and cover other costs associated with providing a quality learning experience for children.
- Child care and early learning providers are paid very low wages, which make it difficult to attract and retain well-qualified workers. Child care workers are, on average, paid just \$11.02 an hour, or \$22,930 per year.^{iv} This also makes it difficult to workers – 94 percent of whom are women² – to support their own families.

WHAT THE CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT DOES

- Ensures that no family under 150 percent of state median income pays more than seven percent of their income on child care, more than **doubling the number of children eligible for child care assistance**

¹ Karen Schulman and Helen Blank, Red Light Green Light: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2016 (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 2016), 9, available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/red-light-green-light-state-child-care-assistance-policies-2016/>.

² U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Table 11: Employed Persons by Detailed Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, 2015, available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>.

- Supports **universal access to high quality pre-school** for all 3- and 4-year olds
- Establishes a new federal-state partnership to provide high-quality, affordable child care from birth through age 13
- Increases workforce training and compensation, including **ensuring all child care workers are paid a living wage** and early childhood educators are provided parity with similarly credentialed and experienced elementary teachers
- Improves care in a variety of setting to address the needs of family, friend, and neighbor care, and care during non-traditional hours to help meet the needs of working families
- Supports development of more inclusive, high-quality child care providers for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities
- Helps all Head Start programs meet the new expanded duration requirements and provide all-day, full-year programming

PLEASE COSPONSOR THE CHILD CARE FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT

- The Child Care for Working Families Act takes positive steps to make quality child care and early learning more affordable for working families.
- Child care and early education programs help parents obtain and retain employment and further their education, while promoting child development and school readiness. The Child Care for Working Families Act directly addresses barriers to accessing quality, affordable child care and early learning programs for working families.
- The Child Care for Working Families Act improves the quality and supply of child care and early learning programs by increasing training and compensation for child care providers.

Please support women, children, and families by co-sponsoring S. 1806/ H.R.3773, the Child Care for Working Families Act.

ⁱ Institute for Women's Policy Research. (September 2016). Breadwinner Mothers by Race/Ethnicity and State. Retrieved 10 January 2017 from: <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/breadwinner-mothers-by-race-ethnicity-and-state/>.

ⁱⁱ Morrisson, A. and Katherine Gallagher Robbins. (September 2015). National Women's Law Center. The Women in the Low-Wage Workforce May Not Be Who You Think. Retrieved 30 March 2017 from http://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/chartbook_women_in_the_lowwage_workforce_may_not_be_who_you_think.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ Id.

^{iv} U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2016 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, available at <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ocwage.pdf>.