

The following is a statement from a group of national early learning and care organizations committed to supporting the child care industry with information and resources about the COVID-19 economic relief measures passed by Congress.

March 27, 2020

During the last few weeks, the harmful health and economic effects of the COVID-19 coronavirus have grown severe for families and businesses across America.

Understanding that the child care industry was poised to experience the effects of this crisis even more acutely as a result of the challenges many providers were already facing, many of us in the advocacy community came together to demonstrate our unity through a set of common recommendations to Capitol Hill. This week, Congress finalized a sweeping economic stimulus bill to provide relief to America's families, small businesses, and major industries as they struggle with the effects of the COVID-19 crisis – the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act – or CARES Act.

Our community's original goals urged Congress to:

- First, ensure child care providers who are closed continue to receive funding that will allow them to pay staff and cover fixed costs, including but not limited to business interruption grants. Child care providers vary widely in their current structures and funding streams. No one financial tool will work for all providers, thus it is essential that child care be included in all available recovery programs.
- Second, make sure that providers who stay open during the crisis have the support necessary to do so and that the children attending their programs – particularly children of first responders, health care providers, and other essential personnel – are receiving assistance.
- Third, sustain the market today and into the future by providing assistance to child care as any other small business receiving relief.

The bipartisan CARES Act deals with the many market disruptions--from business and industry, to the hospitals and health care professionals on the front lines, to millions of families' unimaginable economic uncertainty. The child care crisis weaves across these market disruptions, for providers and early childhood educators and parents alike. We are therefore pleased to see that Congress has included a number of proposals throughout the CARES Act to address the needs of the child care industry, including:

- Both non-profit and for-profit child care providers with less than 500 employees will be eligible to apply for small business loans of which 8 weeks of payroll, mortgage/rent & utility payments, are eligible for loan forgiveness. Midsize and large child care providers may receive federal loan assistance through the Treasury's Exchange Stabilization Act;
- \$3.5 billion in additional funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant Program (CCDBG) to provide child care assistance to health care sector employees, emergency responders, sanitation workers, and other workers deemed essential during the response to the coronavirus;

- An additional \$20 billion in funding for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, which allows states to award funds to early childhood education programs and services;
- \$750 million in Head Start funding to help them respond to COVID-19-related needs of children and families.

We know more assistance and relief will be needed as the harm caused by this horrific pandemic continues to unfold. What we do know, however, is that the statistics we have only just begun tracking paint a stark picture of what's to come:

- New research from the Center for American Progress (CAP) finds that almost 5 million health care workers—around 29 percent of the entire workforce—have children that are too young to be left home alone as schools and child care programs close. This research does not account for the employees in other industries that are essential to keeping the country running through this crisis, including sanitation workers, the food and beverage industry, and more—a large percentage of which rely on child care to be able to go to work. At the same time, with broad swaths of the American workforce staying home amid efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, thousands of child care providers across the country are not earning enough income to keep their businesses running.
- According to a survey of 11,500 child care providers conducted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) from March 12-25, nearly 50% say they would not survive a closure of more than two weeks without significant public investment and support, and 25% say they don't know how long they could close and still re-open without support.

Our work together has only just begun. We must swiftly ensure that every family and provider across America has the information and resources to access the relief made available by the federal government, as well as what is being provided by their states, communities, and the generous philanthropic initiatives who are assisting all of these efforts. Every other industry that is eligible for many of the same supports available to child care providers will soon begin helping their field take advantage of them. We must do the same, and quickly. We are also eager to initiate the next wave of work with Congress in helping to ensure they understand the extent to which these initial relief funds are benefitting the businesses, educators, and families we serve, and then working to ensure that the next round of relief from Congress is effectively meeting the needs of the community.

Signed:

Alliance for Early Success

<http://earlysuccess.org/resources/coronavirus>

Bipartisan Policy Center

<https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/SBA-Assistance-CARES-Act-March-26-2020-BPC-and-CED.pdf>

Center for American Progress

Child Care Aware of America (CCAoA)

<https://www.childcareaware.org/resources/map/>

Early Care and Education Consortium (ECEC)

Educare Learning Network (ELN)

<https://www.educare-schools.org/educare-schools-closures-and-community-resources/>

First Five Years Fund (FFYF)

<https://www.ffyf.org/COVID19>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/covid-19>

National Head Start Association (NHSA)

Ounce of Prevention Fund

<https://ecconnector.org/covid-19/>

Save the Children Action Network (SCAN)