

## ACTION ALERT

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill are making decisions right now that will determine whether Congress will pass a major investment in America's child care and early learning systems before a key window of opportunity closes this fall. While you may feel removed from these ongoing negotiations, know that **YOUR** voice is a powerful tool that can help persuade Congress to invest in child care. Reach out to your Senators and Representative today to ask that they support child care and early learning!

### To find and contact your Senator:

1. Visit the [Senate](http://www.senate.gov) website ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)).
2. Conduct a search using the **Find Your Senators** pull-down menu in the upper right corner (select your state and click Go).
3. On the results page is a link to the Senators' website, contact information, and links to an online contact form (forms vary by Senator).

### To find and contact your Representative:

1. Visit the [House of Representatives](http://www.house.gov) website ([www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)).
2. Conduct a search using the **Find Your Representative** zip code search box in the upper right corner (enter your zip code and click Go).
3. On the results page is a photo of your Representative, links to the Representative's personal website and online contact form, and a local map.
4. In the event your zip code overlaps with multiple congressional districts, the results page will include boxes for you to enter your zip code+4 or mailing address to find the correct Representative.

### Would you rather get in touch with members of Congress using social media?

Using the steps above, navigate to the Congress members' personal website to find links to their social media accounts, usually indicated by the icon of the social media platform and often located in the upper or lower left or right corners of the website homepage.

\*Make sure to verify the account has a blue check next to the name before tweeting. If it does not have the blue check, it is likely a fake account.

# ADVOCACY TIPS

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- You can email, tweet, write a letter and send it in the mail, or call your congressperson's office to get in contact with them. However, picking up the phone and calling is often the most effective way of getting your message across.
- If you have personal stories to share, make sure to include them in your outreach. Personal stories have a large impact on many lawmakers' decision to support something or not.
- If you call or mail a letter, make sure to contact their office in Washington, DC. The DC office is typically where the legislative and policy staffers are working.
- Keep your request simple and to the point, especially if you don't feel like an expert in some of the policy discussions. You don't need to get into the weeds or know every detail, just sticking to the topline issues and sharing your support (or opposition) is enough.
- Don't be nervous when you call! Congressional offices are there to listen and help constituents like you.
- You will likely be speaking with an intern or more junior staffer when you call the office, and they will be unlikely able to give you answers to policy questions you ask or tell you how the Senator/Representative is leaning on an issue. That is okay, your message is still being taken down and delivered to the legislative staffers and your congressperson.
- Be respectful when you contact the office, even if you're feeling frustrated. Congressional staff are often berated and yelled at for things they don't have control over and if you treat them with respect and kindness your request will be taken more seriously.
- The Congressional office will likely ask you for your mailing and/or email address to log into their mail tracking system and to verify you are a constituent. They are not allowed to share this information with anyone else and will only use that information to send you a response.

## SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

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- I am a constituent of Senator/Representative *(insert your Congressperson's name here)* and I urge her/him to support the revamped early learning proposal proposed by Senators Murray and Kaine
- Our current child care and early learning systems are failing and need robust investments
- Families need access to affordable, quality child care and preschool options
- Child care professionals need wage increases in order to help take care of their own families
- These issues existed before the pandemic, but COVID has greatly exacerbated many of the problems already facing the field. Congress must act now

## SAMPLE EMAIL

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Dear Senator/Representative *(insert your Congressperson's name here)*:

I am writing to you today to ask for your support for the inclusion of funding for child care and early childhood education in the potential reconciliation package. The revamped early learning proposal that was recently proposed by Senators Murray and Kaine, would invest robust funding in the existing federal child care program — the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program — which would quickly get funding to all 50 states and territories, strengthen the early learning workforce, expand the supply of quality child care facilities, and lower child care costs for families across the country. The CCDBG program has served millions of children and families for decades; however, due to insufficient funding levels, CCDBG currently only reaches 11% of income-eligible young children and provides insufficient reimbursement to providers.

Additionally, the latest proposal would:

- Fund critical child care infrastructure needs, including higher wages for early educators and staff, including Head Start staff.
- Reduce child care deserts and improve the supply of high-quality child care.
- Support quality improvement activities in all states.
- Establish a new pilot program for states to match federal dollars to expand child care assistance to middle-income families.
- Expand access to high-quality preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds.

It's no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the already overwhelmed child care sector to the brink. America's child care crisis is getting worse with every passing day and families and the field can no longer continue to limp along. As your constituent, and as a professional in the early learning and child care field, I urge you to not delay and support the inclusion of robust child care investments in any reconciliation package that moves forward.

Thank you,

*(Sign your name)*

*(Include your mailing address below)*