

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
2368-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

As you consider Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations legislation, we urge you to include the following high-impact investments in early education, early intervention, and quality child care:

Provide an additional \$5 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) for Fiscal Year 2020. After a historic funding increase for CCDBG in 2018 (which was maintained and slightly expanded in FY 2019), states were able to make important progress in addressing the pressing needs of children and families. However, significant additional investment is necessary to address large gaps in the number of eligible children who are served by the program and to enable more low-income women to work. An additional \$5 billion for the program would result in:

- **Serve up to 670,000 more children:** By doubling the funding for CCDBG for FY 2020, states would be able to expand access to child care assistance to as many as 670,000 additional children. Even though nearly 14 million children are eligible, only 15% of eligible children receive assistance from CCDBG and related funding streams. In fact, more than 450,000 *fewer* children are currently served by the program than were served in 2006.¹
- **Greater program improvements:** Currently, most states set their initial income eligibility limits below the federal maximum level and, as of February 2018, only one state paid providers at the Federally recommended rate. While the FY 2018 CCDBG funding increase has been used to improve these policies in some States, it was not

¹ CLASP, *Child Care Assistance Spending and Participation in 2016, 2018*, <https://www.clasp.org/publications/fact-sheet/child-care-assistance-spending-and-participation-2016>. An additional 49,400 children lost child care assistance between 2016 and 2017.

enough to sufficiently expand eligibility for children and families or raise payments to all providers. By committing to a continued investment in CCDBG, states are further incentivized to expand their income eligibility limits. The median income eligibility limit across states for a family of three, currently, is close to \$36,756 whereas the median eligibility limit allowable under federal law falls closer to \$56,575.²

- **Empowering women to join the workforce:** According to the Department of Health and Human Services, increases in CCDBG subsidies have the potential to substantially increase labor force participation and employment rates of low-income mothers in the United States. The report found that tripling subsidies above 2016 levels would result in the employment of 652,000 women³. Furthermore, the National Women's Law Center and the Center for Law and Social Policy estimate that doubling the funding for CCDBG in 2020 could result in creating paid work for *as many as* 141,000 caregivers.⁴

We believe that an additional investment of \$5 billion in the Child Care Development Block Grant is vital to supporting our nation's caregivers and improving economic mobility for women. In addition, this increase will expand the program's ability to support the more of the roughly 11.5 million eligible children who are not receiving services.

Provide at least \$491,300,000 in FY20 funding for Grants for Infants and Families under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, equal to the enacted FY17 level indexed for two years of inflation. A simple child hearing test costs under \$50. A missed or late hearing impairment diagnosis costs a lifetime of diminished communication skills. This program allows states to provide early intervention and screening for 389,000 American children per year, including but not limited to hearing tests. Renowned economists, including Nobel Laureate James Heckman, have demonstrated high-quality early education can produce from \$7 to \$16 in benefits for every \$1 spent. This substantial return on investment is derived largely from long-term savings associated with a reduced need for special education, improved health outcomes, higher rates of high school and college graduation, decreased dependence on welfare programs, and increased workforce productivity of children who receive a high-quality early education.

Provide at least \$398,400,000 in FY20 funding for Preschool Grants under Part B Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, equal to the enacted FY17 level indexed for two years of inflation. These funds leverage significant nonfederal investment to ensure 800,000 children with disabilities aged 3-5 enter school ready to succeed. As stated above, research has demonstrated early childhood education is an effective strategy for improving the developmental outcomes and long-term success of children, especially low-income children. This program is a critical part of that effort.

² The federal income standard is 85% of State Median Income. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/resource/liheap-im2017-03>.

³ <https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/253961/EffectsCCSubsidiesMaternalLFPTechnical.pdf>

⁴ Unpublished analysis by CLASP and NWLC based on CCDF Data.

Together, these programs have an outsized impact on the economic competitiveness of future generations. They also provide a strong, continuing return to the American taxpayer by both ensuring the sustained prosperity of our nation as a whole and helping families succeed.

We hope you will fully support these critical investments in working women, families, and young learners.

Sincerely,



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



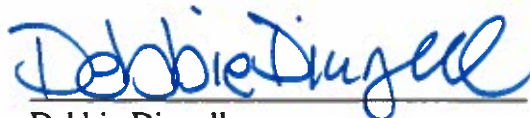
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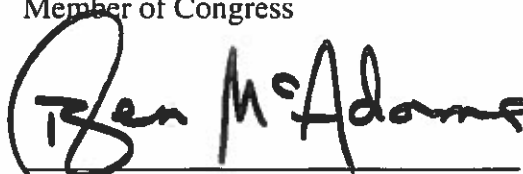
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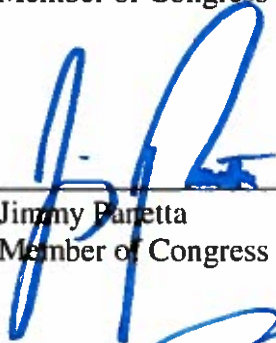
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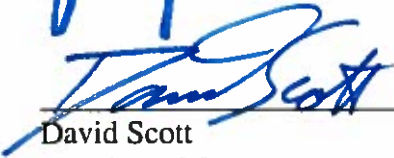
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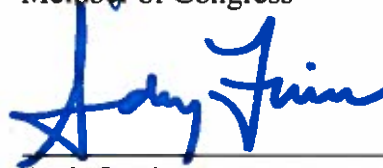
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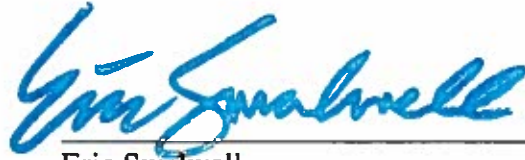
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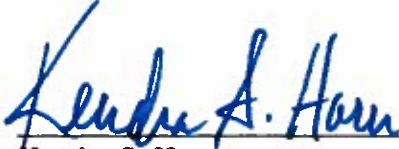
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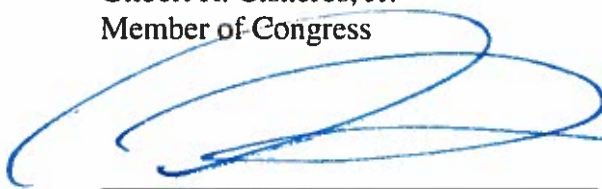
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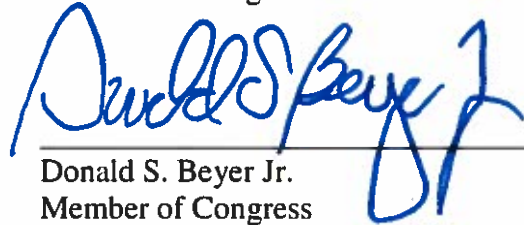
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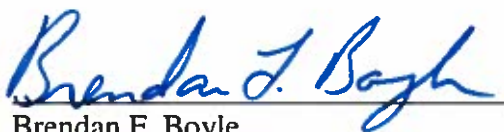
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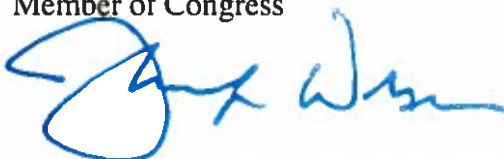
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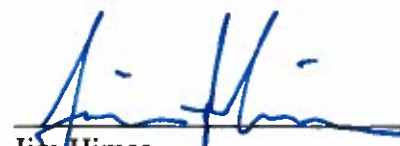
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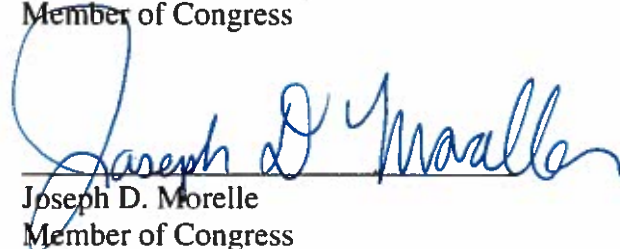
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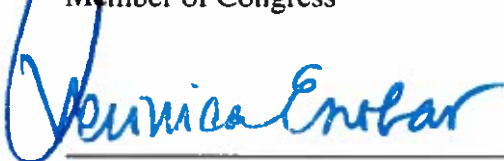
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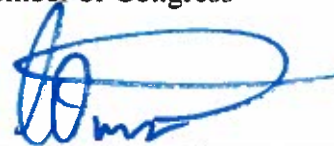
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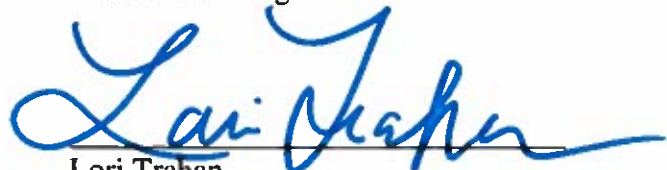
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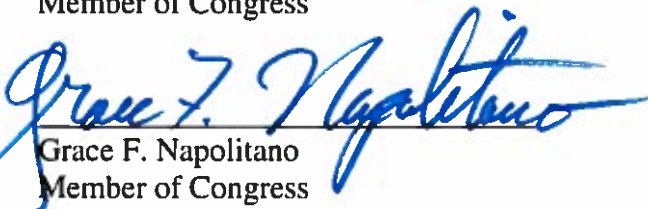
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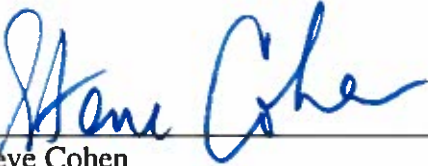
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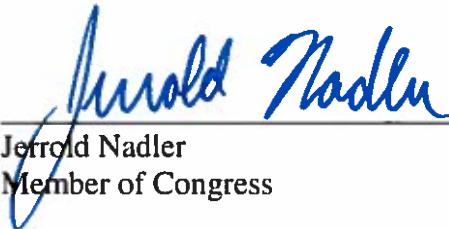
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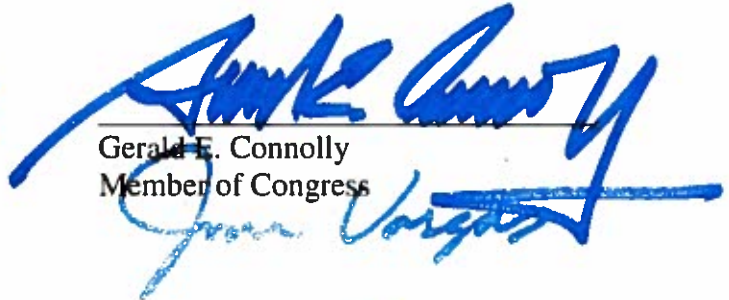
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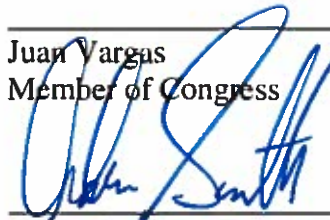
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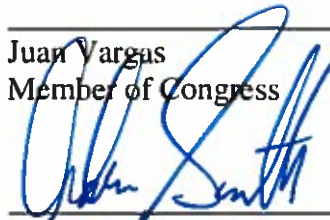
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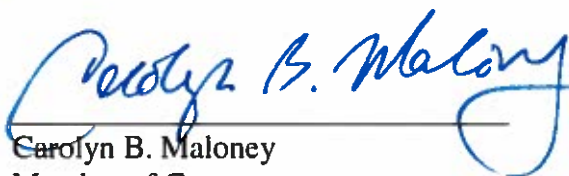
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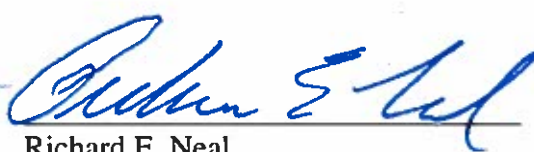
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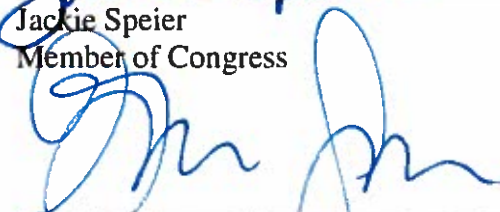

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