



June 27, 2022

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Alex Padilla
Representative Barbara Lee
Representative Eric Swalwell
Representative Ro Khanna

Re: Support Child Care Proposal in Budget Reconciliation Package

Dear Alameda County Delegation,

First 5 Alameda County urges Congress to act swiftly and support a federal budget reconciliation package that *includes comprehensive legislation aimed at reducing the cost of child care for families*. Families and communities are in desperate need of a system of care that supports early care and education opportunities, provides equitable access to paid family and medical leave, expanded Child tax Credits, affordable housing, birthing justice, and additional supports that keep families and communities healthy and ready to thrive. **We ask for your commitment in supporting the inclusion of a child care proposal in the budget reconciliation process to address long-standing structural inequities and ensure babies and families receive the support they need.**

Our mission at First 5 is to build a local responsive early childhood system in support of young children and their families and caregivers. Science tells us that deprivation in the early years has long-term consequences for each child and our society. There is and will remain a direct link between early childhood development, community and family conditions, and our country's stability and prosperity.

Please consider the needs of families and caregivers, and the underlying structural inequities they represent, in Alameda County, the seventh most populous county in the state, as you consider support for child care proposals in the budget reconciliation package:

- Over [48,000 children 0-5 in Alameda County live below 85%](#) of the state median income, a rough estimate for eligibility for subsidized child care.
- [17,604 children utilized subsidized child care](#) in Alameda County in 2018, the majority of whom were ages 3-5.



- There is a significant gap in access to subsidies for income-eligible families- with an [unmet need of 91% of eligible infants and 46% of eligible preschool children](#).
- 87% of Alameda County ECE professionals, most of whom are women of color, are considered very low-income for the County. 50% of ECE professionals earn \$18 or less per hour.
- Child care providers were hard hit by the pandemic. We estimate **that the Alameda County ECE field lost \$395 million in FY2020-21 alone** (\$220 million without taking the increased cost of providing care into consideration) and continues to experience losses in the current fiscal year.

We are grateful for your continued leadership and support for children, families, and communities. Federal child care investments are essential for building a strong foundation for today's children and our country's future. We ask for your continued support of sustainable child care investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Spanos".

Kristin Spanos
Chief Executive Officer
First 5 Alameda County