

July 14, 2021

Dear Senator:

As a nonprofit public policy advocacy group focused on child and family well-being across the state, Michigan's Children has become alarmed and anxious over the lack of action on SB27 targeting critical Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) dollars to child care providers serving hard-working, eligible families making low incomes. We implore you to act today on [SB27](#) to prevent the loss to Michigan of at least \$63 million in CCDF dollars (up to \$105 million overall) necessary to support the child care businesses that working families and their employers rely on.

We realize dedicated lawmakers like yourself care deeply for the well-being of your constituents and have many pressing issues before you. However, Michigan simply cannot forgo nearly \$63 million in federal CCDF dollars because of the continued distraction or inaction by the Legislature. Parents are counting on you. Employers are counting on you.

Access to high-quality, affordable child care has become a pivotal issue for parents and employers emerging from the pandemic with families distressed over its access and expense, and employers panicked by the exodus of talented and trained workers who are unable to secure care for their children in order to go to work. Michigan's Child Development and Care Program (CDC), funded with federal CCDF dollars, helps make child care more affordable for working parents at the lower-end of the income bracket, and helps stave off poverty.

The funding would ensure a 40-percent rate increase to providers in the program retroactive to Oct. 1, 2020, and modify the pay to providers based on enrollment rather than attendance starting on June 28, 2021. These are necessary actions to strengthen and shore up our fragile child care system. By allocating these federal dollars to the CDC program, you can play an essential role in stabilizing Michigan's economy by getting families back to work. Parents of low means can't afford to pay more for child care, and providers can't pay their employees any less and still remain in business.

This is an issue that touches families in every community, rural and urban. You must know that the majority of children under 4 years of age are being raised in households where all parents are working; many of these young children spend the majority of their waking hours in child care. Michigan's Child Development and Care Program allows parents to stay in the labor market longer, and reduces absenteeism and turnover.

We vividly remember the political uproar that occurred in 2016 when Michigan had the unfortunate but unique national distinction of returning some child care dollars to the federal government when the Legislature failed to allocate it by its deadline. Michigan's Children was among those raising the call before the deadline, and calling for government accountability afterward. Let's not repeat the mistakes of the past. Please don't delay. Help assemble your colleagues to adopt SB27 this week.

This year, the funds need to be spent by September 30, but the Legislative summer calendar makes final action dicey if we postpone beyond this week. Please vote in the best interest of the children and families in your district who rely on high-quality, reliable and affordable care.

Sincerely,

Matt Gillard,  
President & CEO,  
Michigan's Children