

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 23, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi:

As the Senate continues deliberations on a new economic reconciliation package, we write to express support for the recent Murray-Kaine proposal on child care and early learning investments and urge its inclusion in the reconciliation package. This new proposal will provide children and working families with critical support to access quality, affordable child care and give child care providers additional resources they so desperately need to help get our economy back on track. Leaving child care out of an upcoming reconciliation package is unacceptable. Parents, especially women, need this investment to get back to work, and employers need their workers to have reliable child care.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the child care industry has faced numerous and steep challenges in their work to adequately serve the population most affected by the pandemic. Families were forced to choose between staying home to care for their children or returning to the workforce and relying on inefficient or scarce alternatives. Furthermore, as inflationary pressures increase and families face rising child care prices, this proposal will allow parents, families, and child care workers to offset part of that burden. The funding will allow those parents who have been unable to rejoin the workforce an opportunity to continue their careers, make sure that their children are adequately cared for, and support the existing child care workforce.

Supporting the child care workforce is a matter of both economic and racial justice, as the House recognized when it passed a robust child care package in the Build Back Better Act. Data reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that caregivers earn an average of just \$12.24 per hour. And we know that the inadequate wages are disproportionately harmful to the women, and overwhelmingly women of color, who make up the care workforce. According to The Education Trust, Black child care workers earn an average of 78 cents less per hour than their white counterparts, even when controlling for education level. The investments in the Murray-Kaine proposal are long overdue updates that will provide these workers with better access to fair compensation and recognize the importance of their work.

We approve of the balanced approach in the proposal between strengthening existing programs and allowing for innovation. The Murray-Kaine plan will triple resources for the nation's existing child care assistance program, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). This funding would be available to every state, allowing parents and families across the country to access reliable and effective child care options. According to the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), more than 1 million new children and their families could receive child care assistance to lower their costs through the plan's CCDBG investment. Additionally, we support the proposal's dedicated funding for increasing wages for Head Start staff, expanding access to high-quality preschool, expanding the supply of high-quality child care, and improving compensation for the early childhood workforce—priorities supported in the House's Build Back Better Act.

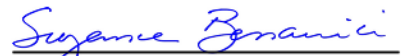
We are also particularly supportive of the proposal's creation of a pilot program that allows some states to test a child care system in which a broader set of low- and middle-income families will not pay more than 7 percent of their income for child care for children under age six. This pilot will incentivize innovation and reform that is desperately needed in the field.

As parents look to return to the workforce and workers in all industries aim to deal with inflationary price increases, child care funding remains crucial to fostering a strong care and early education system and strengthening our economy. Thank you for your consideration of our request, we look forward to working with you on this important initiative.


Sincerely,




Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress




Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress




Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress




Jim Himes
Member of Congress




A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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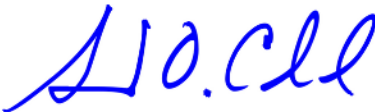
Katherine M. Clark
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Stephen F. Lynch
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Lois Frankel
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Salud Carbajal
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Bonnie Watson Coleman
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Dwight Evans
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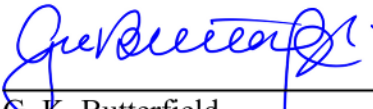
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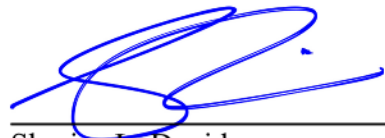
Dina Titus
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Eric Swalwell
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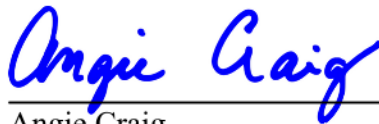
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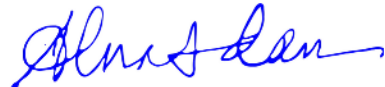
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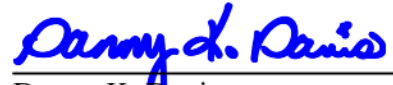
Karen Bass
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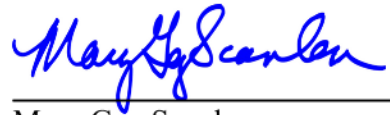
Shontel M. Brown
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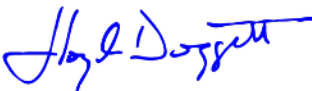
Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



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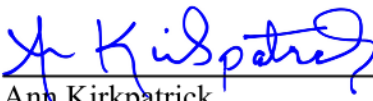
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
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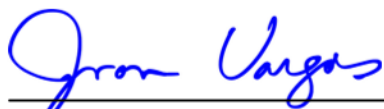
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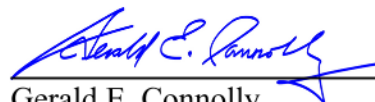
Daniel T. Kildee
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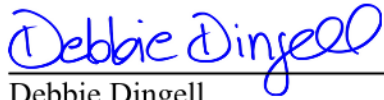
Grace Meng
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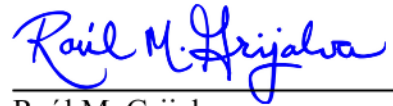
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



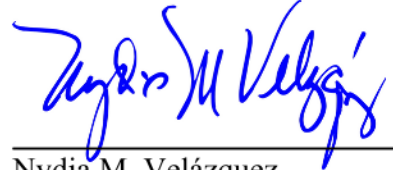
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



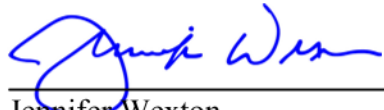
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



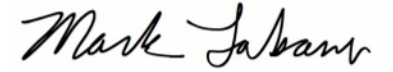
Ted W. Lieu
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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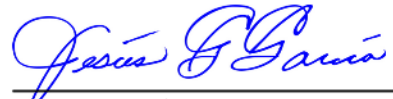
Jennifer Wexton
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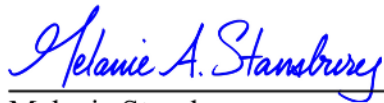
MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



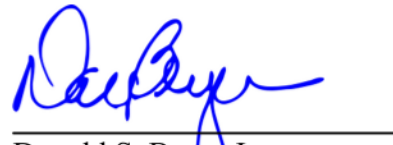
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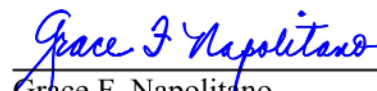
Bill Foster
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Sylvia R. Garcia
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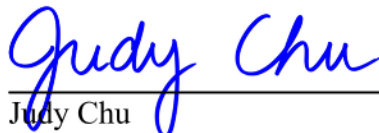
Grace F. Napolitano
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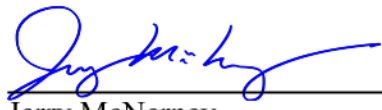
James R. Langevin
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Peter Welch
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Judy Chu
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Kathy Castor
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C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
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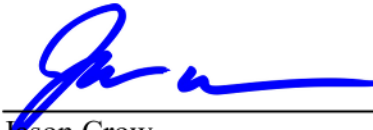
Ro Khanna
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Donald Norcross
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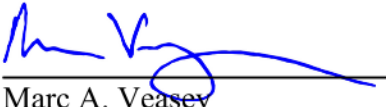
Derek Kilmer
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Jason Crow
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Josh Harder
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Marilyn Strickland
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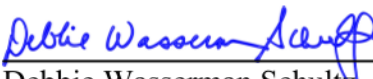
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



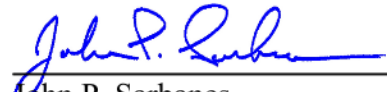
Ruben Gallego
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Doris Matsui
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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John P. Sarbanes
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Tony Cárdenas
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Troy Carter
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Ilhan Omar
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Scott H. Peters
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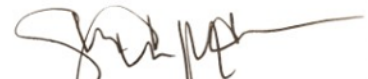
Teresa Leger Fernández
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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Marcy Kaptur
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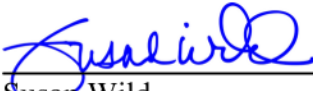
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



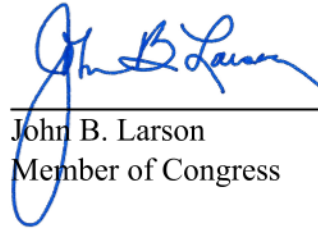
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



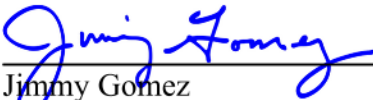
Ayanna Pressley
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Susan Wild
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



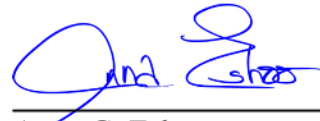
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
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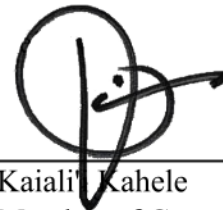
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



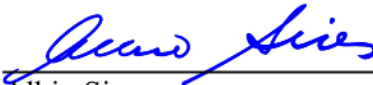
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Kaiali'i Kahele
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Cc: Chair Patty Murray, Chairman Bobby Scott, and Senator Tim Kaine