

August 5, 2010

The Honorable Pete Stark
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Stark:

As early childhood leaders, we applaud you for setting aside a portion of the revenues raised by H.R. 5783, the Investing in Our Future Act, to support the Child Care and Development Block Grant as well as other important national priorities.

High quality child care is a key link to our nation's economic success. It is a basic that helps families and children succeed. High-quality care has been shown to have a positive impact on early childhood development, in addition to giving parents the help they need to find and keep a job.

Studies are clear that child care helps keep parents in the work force. However, only one in six children eligible for federal child care assistance receives help. Many states have long waiting lists of parents who need child care assistance.

Families with tight budgets must come up with a way to pay for child care on their own. Some will have no choice but to use lower-cost child care that may not offer the early learning environment their children need to get a strong start. Some parents will lose their jobs when unreliable child care arrangements fall through or when they cannot find any affordable child care at all. Some parents will have no choice but to turn to welfare to support their families despite their desire to work.

We thank you for all that you have done to help ensure that low-income children get a strong start and their families have the help they need to get and keep a job.

Sincerely,

CLASP
Early Care and Education Consortium
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies
National Women's Law Center
The First Five Years Fund
ZERO TO THREE