

June 10, 2020

Dear Governor Inslee,

We very much appreciate your comments on Black Lives Matter and your recognition that economic inequity is a factor of institutional racism of our state. As a state, we disproportionately depend upon Black, Latinx, and immigrant Americans for the care and education of our youngest children. As a state, we provide poverty level wages and subsidies for care which keep kids in poverty.

Today we received the proposed cuts to child care recommended by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. The Department recommends cutting \$30 million from Working Connections Child Care, as well as eliminating ECEAP expansion, subsidy rate increases, and scholarship and education awards for child care teachers. On top of that, DCYF just announced that child care grant funding is depleted and the grant application is no longer available. All this, even though the Department sits on \$29 million of federal CARES act funding for child care.

We live in an incredibly wealthy state. You can rescue child care and enable the following actions with CARES funding and new progressive funding sources, such as a windfall compensation tax on corporations, which would raise at least \$500 million.

- 1) Don't kick families off child care subsidies. The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCFY) has chosen to count emergency unemployment benefits toward financial eligibility for child care subsidies, which will cause many low-income families to lose benefits. That's wrong, especially compared with Apple Health, which is not counting emergency unemployment benefits toward low-income health coverage.
- 2) Washington State has received \$58 million in federal CARES Act funding specifically for child care, but has only released \$29 million so far in grants to child care providers. We need the other \$29 million released immediately.
- 3) CARES Act child care grants were only made available to programs that are still open. Programs which closed in response to the pandemic should be eligible to receive CARES Act funding to help them re-open and preserve child care slots.
- 4) No cuts to child care. Child care funding must be protected and expanded as an essential service for a thriving economy. DCYF is recommending \$30 million in cuts to Working Connections Child Care.
- 5) DCYF claims that it "leads for racial equity, diversity, and inclusion." That is hard to believe, when women of color are the foundation of early learning and child care, and the state continues a regime of poverty level compensation and no health coverage. Give teachers and child care workers respect, not rhetoric.

The crisis in child care is urgent and real solutions cannot wait. We look forward to hearing back from you soon on our specific requests above.

Sincerely,

Karen Ekdahl, Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center

Susan Hodges, Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center

Elizabeth Maynard, Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center

Leigh Montague, Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center

Darlene Darnell, Catholic Charities Serving Central Washington

Tracy Mitchell, Child Care Action Council

Hannah Lidman, Children's Alliance

Cindy Balzer, Cindy's Child Care & Learning Center

Annie Fadely, Civic Ventures

John Bancroft, Columbia City Consulting

Lois Martin, Community Day Center for Children, Inc.

Pam Grigsby Jones, Early Learning Consultant

John Burbank, Economic Opportunity Institute

April Shine, Foundation for Tacoma Students

Crystal Johnson, Good Times Childcare Center LLC

Saliha Madani, Happy Home Child Care

Joy Scott Miller, Joyful Kids Daycare

Laura Tanzy, Lauras Little People Care

Lei Pedro, Learning Care Group Inc.

Corrina Perfy, Little Explorers

Jodi Cofield, Loving & Learning In-Home Childcare

Melissa Kenney, Nature Nurture Farm School

James Bender, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Rixa Evershed, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Jessica Merritt, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Alaina Moon, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Alyssa Overbey, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Julie Peters, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Nicole Peters, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Andrew Ryan, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Alyse Spurgeon, Nature Nurtures Farm School

Janic Deguchi, Neighborhood House

Rich Stolz, OneAmerica

Carol Morris, PeeWee's Learning Center, LLC
Mailin David, Pike Market Child Care and Preschool

Kathleen Richardson, Pike Market Child Care and Preschool

Lesa Valenzuela, Pike Market Child Care and Preschool

Lori Pittman, Puget Sound Educational Service District and Seattle Educare

Tina Moncrease, Seeds of Faith Academy

Will Moncrease, Jr., Seeds of Faith Academy

Mary Curry, SEIU 925, FCC

Sequoia Hartman, Sequoia's Treehouse, LLC

Lisa Smith, Sunshine KinderKare

Samantha Navarro, The Children's Courtyard South Building

Kimberly Walbeck, The Seedlings Early Learning Center Inc.

Teresa Andrews, The Wonder Years

Jacqueline Boles, Tiny Tots

Tracy Dawson, Tracy's Tikes Day-Care & Preschool

Katie Hudkins, Treetop Village Campus and Infant Center

Nancy Spurgeon, Washington Association for the Education of Young Children

April Messenger, Washington State Parent Ambassadors

Metassibia Mulugeta, Wedgwood Montessori School

Bevette Irvis, Wellspring Family Services

Lori Pittman, White Center Parent Ambassadors

Henry Carson, Parent

Meghan Commins, Parent

Stephanie Heiges, Parent

Tiffany Heiges, Parent

Whitney Holm, Parent

Patrick Holm, Parent

Janna Ryan, Parent

Michelle Spenser, Parent

Anna Saradeth, Student