The child care sector is in crisis. Child care is unaffordable for many families, and the low wages paid to care workers are exacerbating supply issues. A thriving child care sector is crucial for children, families, and the economy.

Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Tim Kaine (D-VA) recently released a child care and early education proposal for inclusion in a federal budget reconciliation package. The proposal would lower families’ costs, expand the supply and quality of child care and preschool, and raise wages for the child care and early education workforce.

Central to the proposal is a $72 billion investment in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the primary federal source of child care assistance for families with low incomes. Currently, CCDBG reaches only 1 in 7 eligible children due to insufficient funding.\(^1\) CLASP analysis shows an estimated 1 million+ children nationally could benefit from the CCDBG investment. Even more would be reached through investments in preschool and Head Start.\(^2\)

The Murray-Kaine proposal will allow more of Tennessee’s children access to quality child care, help reduce the high costs of child care, and raise wages for the child care workforce.

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ENDNOTES


7 Child Care Aware of America, Demanding Change: Repairing our Child Care System, Appendix I: 2020 Average Annual Price of Full-Time Center-Based Child Care by State, March 2022, https://info.childcareaware.org/hubfs/Demanding%20Change%20Appendices.pdf.

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