

U.S.C. 831c(k)), Congress approves the conveyance by the Tennessee Valley Authority, on behalf of the United States, to the State of Mississippi of the Yellow Creek Port properties owned by the United States and in the custody of the Authority at Iuka, Mississippi, as of the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3044.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Tennessee Valley Authority was created by Congress in 1933 to provide wholesale electric power and create economic development opportunities for those States in the Tennessee Valley region.

The State of Mississippi initiated development of Yellow Creek Port in 1971 on 116 acres purchased from the TVA. Industrial growth, high-paying jobs, associated spinoff companies, and increased traffic on the Nation's inland waterway system have occurred because of the development of Yellow Creek Port.

I would like to thank Congressman ALAN NUNNELEE for introducing H.R. 3044, legislation that will convey land from TVA to the State of Mississippi to provide economic development opportunities in the region. Nunnelee has been a leader on these types of activities since he was elected to Congress in 2010.

The land being conveyed through this legislation will be used solely for industrial purposes and allow the State of Mississippi to expand the Yellow Creek Port to meet increasing demand.

H.R. 3044 will execute the conveyance of the remaining 173 acres of property from TVA to the State of Mississippi to complete the development of Yellow Creek Port and fulfill one of TVA's missions of ensuring economic development opportunities in the TVA service area.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H.R. 3044, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3044 will allow the transfer of 173 acres of Tennessee Valley Authority lands to the State of Mississippi for industrial and economic development.

The Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 withdrew lands from the Tennessee River System to provide for fu-

ture development of power plants, industrial sites, ports, and supporting infrastructure.

In 1971 at the confluence of the Tennessee and the Tombigbee Rivers, the Yellow Creek Port project was initiated. The purpose of the Yellow Creek Port project was to support economic development and local jobs in north-east Mississippi. The TVA and the State of Mississippi have jointly supported the development and growth of the port.

TVA initially transferred 289 acres of land to the Yellow Creek Port to facilitate development back in 1971. H.R. 3044 would transfer an additional 173 acres of the land to the State of Mississippi.

The acreage includes industrial, highway, and railroad easements and 54 acres of undeveloped land. The TVA has attempted to sell this land since 1984, with no interested buyers.

Mr. Speaker, the TVA Act allows TVA, with appropriate congressional approvals, to dispose of property for particular uses. According to TVA, the agency places reversionary interest clauses in transfers and sales to ensure that those uses specified by Congress in the TVA Act are carried out. TVA then retains the right to retake possession of the property if the use condition is breached.

In February the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee considered and passed S. 212, by a voice vote, which supported the transfer of these same 173 acres. The Congressional Budget Office has concluded that the net impact of the transfer would be insignificant and would not affect direct spending. TVA has confirmed that the transferred lands would be used for industrial development; and again, if for some reason the lands are instead proposed for some nonindustrial purpose, the TVA can legally have the lands returned to them.

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any opposition to H.R. 3044, and as we have heard, the construction of the Yellow Creek Port in 1971 initially involved approximately 289 acres.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the passage of H.R. 3044.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Maryland for her support. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3044.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1086

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

Section 658A of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9801 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 658A. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

"(a) SHORT TITLE.—This subchapter may be cited as the 'Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990'.

"(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this subchapter are—

"(1) to allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;

"(2) to promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suit their family's needs;

"(3) to encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings;

"(4) to assist States in delivering high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;

"(5) to assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including State regulations);

"(6) to improve child care and development of participating children; and

"(7) to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 658B of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858) is amended by striking "subchapter" and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting "subchapter \$2,360,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, \$2,478,000,000 for fiscal year 2016, \$2,539,950,000 for fiscal year 2017, \$2,603,448,750 for fiscal year 2018, \$2,668,534,969 for fiscal year 2019, and \$2,748,591,018 for fiscal year 2020."

SEC. 4. LEAD AGENCY.

(a) DESIGNATION.—Section 658D(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking "chief executive officer" and inserting "Governor"; and

(2) by striking "designate" and all that follows and inserting "designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint interagency office, that complies with the requirements of subsection (b) to serve as the lead agency for the State under this subchapter."

(b) COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES.—Section 658D(b)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) at the option of an Indian tribe or tribal organization in the State, collaborate and coordinate with such Indian tribe or tribal organization in the development of the State plan in a timely manner.”.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION AND PLAN.

(a) PERIOD.—Section 658E(b) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(b)) is amended by striking “2-year” and inserting “3-year”.

(b) POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Section 658E(c) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or established” after “designated”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by inserting a comma after “care of such providers”;

(B) by striking subparagraphs (D) through (H); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) MONITORING AND INSPECTION REPORTS.—The plan shall include a certification that the State, not later than 1 year after the State has in effect the policies and practices described in subparagraph (K)(i), will make public by electronic means, in a consumer-friendly and easily accessible format, organized by provider, the results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints about failure to comply with this subchapter and State child care policies, as well as the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in child care settings each year, for eligible child care providers within the State. The results shall also include information on the date of such an inspection, and, where applicable, information on corrective action taken.

“(E) CONSUMER AND PROVIDER EDUCATION INFORMATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State will collect and disseminate (which dissemination may be done, except as otherwise specified in this subparagraph, through resource and referral organizations or other means as determined by the State) to parents of eligible children, the general public, and, where applicable, providers—

“(i) information about the availability of the full diversity of child care services that will promote informed child care choices and that concerns—

“(I) the availability of child care services provided through programs authorized by this subchapter and, if feasible, other child care services and other programs provided in the State for which the family may be eligible, as well as the availability of financial assistance to obtain child care services in the State;

“(II) if available, information about the quality of providers, as determined by the State, that can be provided through a Quality Rating and Improvement System;

“(III) information, made available through a State Web site, describing the State process for licensing child care providers, the State processes for conducting background checks, and monitoring and inspections, of child care providers, and the offenses that prevent individuals and entities from serving as child care providers in the State;

“(IV) other programs for which families that receive child care services for which financial assistance is provided under this subchapter may be eligible, including the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established

under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), Head Start and Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), the program carried out under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.), the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children established under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), the child and adult care food program established under section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766), and the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs under titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq., 1397aa et seq.);

“(V) programs carried out under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);

“(VI) research and best practices concerning children's development, including social and emotional development, early childhood development, and meaningful parent and family engagement, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity); and

“(VII) the State policies regarding the social-emotional behavioral health of young children, which may include positive behavioral intervention and support models, and policies on expulsion of preschool-aged children, in early childhood programs receiving assistance under this subchapter; and

“(ii) information on developmental screenings, including—

“(I) information on existing (as of the date of submission of the application containing the plan) resources and services the State can deploy, including the coordinated use of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and developmental screening services available under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), in conducting developmental screenings and providing referrals to services, when appropriate, for children who receive assistance under this subchapter; and

“(II) a description of how a family or eligible child care provider may utilize the resources and services described in subclause (I) to obtain developmental screenings for children who receive assistance under this subchapter who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, which may include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays.

“(F) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include a certification that the State involved has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the State, and provide a detailed description of such requirements and of how such requirements are effectively enforced.

“(ii) LICENSE EXEMPTION.—If the State uses funds received under this subchapter to support a child care provider that is exempt from the corresponding licensing requirements described in clause (i), the plan shall include a description stating why such licensing exemption does not endanger the health, safety, or development of children who receive services from child care providers who are exempt from such requirements.

“(G) TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe the training and professional development requirements that are in effect within the State designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and to improve the knowledge and skills of the child care workforce. Such requirements shall be applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall provide an assurance that such training and professional development—

“(I) shall be conducted on an ongoing basis, provide for a progression of professional development (which may include encouraging the pursuit of postsecondary education), reflect current research and best practices relating to the skills necessary for the child care workforce to meet the developmental needs of participating children, and improve the quality of, and stability within, the child care workforce;

“(II) shall be developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))), and may engage training providers in aligning training opportunities with the State's training framework;

“(III) incorporates knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), the State's health and safety standards, and incorporates social-emotional behavior intervention models, which may include positive behavior intervention and support models;

“(IV) shall be accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations that receive assistance under this subchapter; and

“(V) to the extent practicable, are appropriate for a population of children that includes—

“(aa) different age groups;

“(bb) English learners;

“(cc) children with disabilities; and

“(dd) Native Americans, including Indians, as the term is defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b) (including Alaska Natives within the meaning of that term), and Native Hawaiians (as defined in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)).

“(iii) INFORMATION.—The plan shall include the number of hours of training required for eligible providers and caregivers to engage in annually, as determined by the State.

“(iv) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary shall not require an individual or entity that provides child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter to acquire a credential to provide such services. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a State from requiring a credential.

“(H) CHILD-TO-PROVIDER RATIO STANDARDS.—

“(i) STANDARDS.—The plan shall describe child care standards for child care services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, to provide for the safety and developmental needs of the children served, that address—

“(I) group size limits for specific age populations, as determined by the State;

“(II) the appropriate ratio between the number of children and the number of providers, in terms of the age of the children in child care, as determined by the State; and

“(III) required qualifications for such providers, as determined by the State.

“(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to States on child-to-provider ratios described in clause (i) according to setting and age group, but shall not require that the State maintain specific group size limits for specific age populations or child-to-provider ratios for providers who receive assistance in accordance with subchapter.

“(I) HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that there are in effect within the State, under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter. Such requirements—

“(i) shall relate to matters including health and safety topics consisting of—

“(I) the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization) and the establishment of a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care to receive services under this subchapter while their families (including foster families) are taking any necessary action to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements;

“(II) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;

“(III) the administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;

“(IV) the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions;

“(V) building and physical premises safety, including identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;

“(VI) prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma;

“(VII) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1));

“(VIII) the handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants;

“(IX) for providers that offer transportation, if applicable, appropriate precautions in transporting children;

“(X) first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

“(XI) minimum health and safety training, to be completed pre-service or during an orientation period in addition to ongoing training, appropriate to the provider setting involved that addresses each of the requirements relating to matters described in subclauses (I) through (X); and

“(ii) may include requirements relating to nutrition, access to physical activity, or any other subject area determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children’s health and safety.

“(J) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers within the State, that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements as described in subparagraph (I).

“(K) ENFORCEMENT OF LICENSING AND OTHER REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) CERTIFICATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant

Act of 2014, shall have in effect policies and practices, applicable to licensing or regulating child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter and the facilities of those providers, that—

“(I) ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State’s licensure requirements;

“(II) require licensing inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the lead agency) of those child care providers and facilities to perform inspections, with—

“(aa) not less than 1 prelicensure inspection, for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, of each such child care provider and facility in the State; and

“(bb) not less than annually, an inspection (which shall be unannounced) of each such child care provider and facility in the State for compliance with all child care licensing standards, which shall include an inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards (inspectors may inspect for compliance with all 3 standards at the same time);

“(III) require the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State to be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal, State, and local law; and

“(IV) require licensing inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the lead agency) of child care providers and facilities to perform an annual inspection of each license-exempt provider in the State receiving funds under this subchapter (unless the provider is an eligible child care provider as described in section 658P(6)(B)) for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, at a time to be determined by the State.

“(i) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to a State, if requested by the State, on a research-based minimum standard regarding ratios described in clause (i)(III) and provide technical assistance to the State on meeting the minimum standard within a reasonable time period, but shall not prescribe a particular ratio.

“(L) COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that child care providers within the State will comply with the child abuse reporting requirements of section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)).

“(M) MEETING THE NEEDS OF CERTAIN POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe how the State will develop and implement strategies (which may include alternative reimbursement rates to child care providers, the provision of direct contracts or grants to community-based organizations, offering child care certificates to parents, or other means determined by the State) to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care services for—

“(i) children in underserved areas;

“(ii) infants and toddlers;

“(iii) children with disabilities, as defined by the State; and

“(iv) children who receive care during non-traditional hours.

“(N) PROTECTION FOR WORKING PARENTS.—

“(i) MINIMUM PERIOD.—

“(I) 12-MONTH PERIOD.—The plan shall demonstrate that each child who receives assistance under this subchapter in the State will be considered to meet all eligibility requirements for such assistance and will receive such assistance, for not less than 12 months

before the State or designated local entity redetermines the eligibility of the child under this subchapter, regardless of a temporary change in the ongoing status of the child’s parent as working or attending a job training or educational program or a change in family income for the child’s family, if that family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(II) FLUCTUATIONS IN EARNINGS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State’s or designated local entity’s processes for initial determination and redetermination of such eligibility take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings.

“(ii) REDETERMINATION PROCESS.—The plan shall describe the procedures and policies that are in place to ensure that working parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment in order to comply with the State’s or designated local entity’s requirements for redetermination of eligibility for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(iii) PERIOD BEFORE TERMINATION.—At the option of the State, the plan shall demonstrate that the State will not terminate assistance provided to carry out this subchapter based on a factor consisting of a parent’s loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program for which the family was receiving the assistance, without continuing the assistance for a reasonable period of time, of not less than 3 months, after such loss or cessation in order for the parent to engage in a job search and resume work, or resume attendance at a job training or educational program, as soon as possible.

“(iv) GRADUATED PHASEOUT OF CARE.—The plan shall describe the policies and procedures that are in place to allow for provision of continued assistance to carry out this subchapter, at the beginning of a new eligibility period under clause (i)(I), for children of parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program and whose family income exceeds the State’s income limit to initially qualify for such assistance, if the family income for the family involved does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(O) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe how the State, in order to expand accessibility and continuity of care, and assist children enrolled in early childhood programs to receive full-day services, will efficiently, and to the extent practicable, coordinate the services supported to carry out this subchapter with programs operating at the Federal, State, and local levels for children in preschool programs, tribal early childhood programs, and other early childhood programs, including those serving infants and toddlers with disabilities, homeless children, and children in foster care.

“(ii) OPTIONAL USE OF COMBINED FUNDS.—If the State elects to combine funding for the services supported to carry out this subchapter with funding for any program described in clause (i), the plan shall describe how the State will combine the multiple sets of funding and use the combined funding.

“(iii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to affect the priority of children described in clause (i) to receive full-day prekindergarten or Head Start program services.

“(P) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State encourages partnerships among State agencies,

other public agencies, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities, including faith-based and community-based organizations, to leverage existing service delivery systems (as of the date of the submission of the application containing the plan) for child care and development services and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children who are less than 13 years of age, such as by implementing voluntary shared services alliance models.

“(Q) PRIORITY FOR LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe the process the State proposes to use, with respect to investments made to increase access to programs providing high-quality child care and development services, to give priority for those investments to children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such programs.

“(R) CONSULTATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State has developed the plan in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)).

“(S) PAYMENT PRACTICES.—The plan shall include—

“(i) a certification that the payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who receive assistance under this subchapter reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who do not receive assistance under this subchapter, so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive assistance under this subchapter; and

“(ii) an assurance that the State will, to the extent practicable, implement enrollment and eligibility policies that support the fixed costs of providing child care services by delinking provider reimbursement rates from an eligible child’s occasional absences due to holidays or unforeseen circumstances such as illness.

“(T) EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include an assurance that the State will maintain or implement early learning and developmental guidelines (or develop such guidelines if the State does not have such guidelines as of the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014) that are appropriate for children from birth to kindergarten entry, describing what such children should know and be able to do, and covering the essential domains of early childhood development for use statewide by child care providers. Such guidelines shall—

“(I) be research-based, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with entry to kindergarten;

“(II) be implemented in consultation with the state educational agency and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))); and

“(III) be updated as determined by the State.

“(ii) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—The plan shall include an assurance that funds received by the State to carry out this subchapter will not be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that—

“(I) will be the sole basis for a child care provider being determined to be ineligible to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter;

“(II) will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider;

“(III) will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness; or

“(IV) will be used to deny children eligibility to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter.

“(iii) EXCEPTIONS.—Nothing in this subchapter shall preclude the State from using a single assessment as determined by the State for children for—

“(I) supporting learning or improving a classroom environment;

“(II) targeting professional development to a provider;

“(III) determining the need for health, mental health, disability, developmental delay, or family support services;

“(IV) obtaining information for the quality improvement process at the State level; or

“(V) conducting a program evaluation for the purposes of providing program improvement and parent information.

“(iv) NO FEDERAL CONTROL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize an officer or employee of the Federal Government to—

“(I) mandate, direct, control, or place conditions (outside of what is required by this subchapter) around adopting a State’s early learning and developmental guidelines developed in accordance with this section;

“(II) establish any criterion that specifies, defines, prescribes, or places conditions (outside of what is required by this subchapter) on a State adopting standards or measures that a State uses to establish, implement, or improve such guidelines, related accountability systems, or alignment of such guidelines with education standards; or

“(III) require a State to submit such guidelines for review.

“(U) DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall demonstrate the manner in which the State will address the needs of children in child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter, including the need for safe child care, for the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as such terms are defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)).

“(ii) STATEWIDE CHILD CARE DISASTER PLAN.—Such plan shall include a statewide child care disaster plan for coordination of activities and collaboration, in the event of an emergency or disaster described in clause (i), among the State agency with jurisdiction over human services, the agency with jurisdiction over State emergency planning, the State lead agency, the State agency with jurisdiction over licensing of child care providers, the local resource and referral organizations, the State resource and referral system, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care as provided for under section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)).

“(iii) DISASTER PLAN COMPONENTS.—The components of the disaster plan, for such an emergency or disaster, shall include—

“(I) evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down procedures, and procedures for communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions;

“(II) guidelines for the continuation of child care services in the period following the emergency or disaster, which may include the provision of emergency and temporary child care services, and temporary op-

erating standards for child care providers during that period; and

“(III) procedures for staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills.

“(V) BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The plan shall describe how the State will develop and implement strategies to strengthen the business practices of child care providers to expand the supply, and improve the quality of, child care services.”;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “as required under” and inserting “in accordance with”;

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking “The State” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The State”;

(ii) by striking “and any other activity that the State deems appropriate to realize any of the goals specified in paragraphs (2) through (5) of section 658A(b)” and inserting “activities that improve access to child care services, including the use of procedures to permit enrollment (after an initial eligibility determination) of homeless children while required documentation is obtained, training and technical assistance on identifying and serving homeless children and their families, and specific outreach to homeless families, and any other activity that the State determines to be appropriate to meet the purposes of this subchapter (which may include an activity described in clause (ii))”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) REPORT BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30 of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and September 30 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary (acting through the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services) shall prepare a report that contains a determination about whether each State uses amounts provided to such State for the fiscal year involved under this subchapter in accordance with the priority for services described in clause (i).

“(II) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year that the report of the Secretary described in subclause (I) indicates that a State has failed to give priority for services in accordance with clause (i), the Secretary shall—

“(aa) inform the State that the State has until the date that is 6 months after the Secretary has issued such report to fully comply with clause (i);

“(bb) provide the State an opportunity to modify the State plan of such State, to make the plan consistent with the requirements of clause (i), and resubmit such State plan to the Secretary not later than the date described in item (aa); and

“(cc) if the State does not fully comply with clause (i) and item (bb), by the date described in item (aa), withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the first full fiscal year after that date.

“(III) WAIVER FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding subclause (II) the Secretary may grant a waiver to a State for one year to the penalty applied in subclause (II) if the Secretary determines there are extraordinary circumstances, such as a natural disaster, that prevent the State from complying with clause (i). If the Secretary does grant a waiver to a State under this section, the Secretary shall, within 30

days of granting such waiver, submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the circumstances of the waiver including the stated reason from the State on the need for a waiver, the expected impact of the waiver on children served under this program, and any such other relevant information the Secretary deems necessary.

“(iii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—A State may use amounts described in clause (i) to establish or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the State, by a statewide public or private nonprofit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization.

“(II) LOCAL OR REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The local or regional child care resource and referral organizations supported as described in subclause (I) shall—

“(aa) provide parents in the State with consumer education information referred to in paragraph (2)(E) (except as otherwise provided in that paragraph), concerning the full range of child care options (including faith-based and community-based child care providers), analyzed by provider, including child care provided during nontraditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their political subdivisions or regions;

“(bb) to the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance under this subchapter to offer the families support and assistance, using information described in item (aa), to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use, in an effort to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in the most appropriate child care setting to suit their needs and one that is of high quality (as determined by the State);

“(cc) collect data and provide information on the coordination of services and supports, including services under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431, et seq.), for children with disabilities (as defined in section 602 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1401));

“(dd) collect data and provide information on the supply of and demand for child care services in political subdivisions or regions within the State and submit such information to the State;

“(ee) work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities, including faith-based and community-based child care providers, to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the State; and

“(ff) as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the State lead agency and local agencies that administer funds made available in accordance with this subchapter.”;

(C) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) by striking “1997 through 2002)” and inserting “2015 through 2020”; and

(ii) by striking “other than families described in paragraph (2)(H)” and inserting “including or in addition to families with children described in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of paragraph (2)(M)”;

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) DIRECT SERVICES.—From amounts provided to a State for a fiscal year to carry out this subchapter, the State shall—

“(i) reserve the minimum amount required to be reserved under section 658G, and the funds for costs described in subparagraph (C); and

“(ii) from the remainder, use not less than 70 percent to fund direct services (provided by the State) in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).”;

(4) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) PAYMENT RATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State plan shall certify that payment rates for the provision of child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to child care services that are comparable to child care services in the State or substate area involved that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this subchapter or to receive child care assistance under any other Federal or State program, and shall provide a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that such rates are sufficient to ensure such access.

“(B) SURVEY.—The State plan shall—

“(i) demonstrate that the State has, after consulting with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established in section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)), local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities, developed and conducted (not earlier than 2 years before the date of the submission of the application containing the State plan) a statistically valid and reliable survey of the market rates for child care services in the State (that reflects variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child) or an alternative methodology, such as a cost estimation model, that has been developed by the State lead agency;

“(ii) demonstrate that the State prepared a detailed report containing the results of the State market rates survey or alternative methodology conducted pursuant to clause (i), and made the results of the survey or alternative methodology widely available (not later than 30 days after the completion of such survey or alternative methodology) through periodic means, including posting the results on the Internet;

“(iii) describe how the State will set payment rates for child care services, for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter—

“(I) in accordance with the results of the market rates survey or alternative methodology conducted pursuant to clause (i);

“(II) taking into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided under this subchapter before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014; and

“(III) without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families in the State receiving such assistance to carry out this subchapter, relative to the number of such families on the date of enactment of that Act; and

“(iv) describe how the State will provide for timely payment for child care services provided under this subchapter.

“(C) CONSTRUCTION.—

“(i) NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to create a private right of action if the State acted in accordance with this paragraph.

“(ii) NO PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN DIFFERENT RATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prevent a State from differentiating the payment rates described in subparagraph (B)(iii) on the basis of such factors as—

“(I) geographic location of child care providers (such as location in an urban or rural area);

“(II) the age or particular needs of children (such as the needs of children with disabilities and children served by child protective services);

“(III) whether the providers provide child care services during weekend and other non-traditional hours; or

“(IV) the State’s determination that such differentiated payment rates may enable a parent to choose high-quality child care that best fits the parent’s needs.”; and

(5) in paragraph (5), by inserting “(that is not a barrier to families receiving assistance under this subchapter)” after “cost sharing”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 658F(b)(2) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858d(b)(2)) is amended by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”.

SEC. 6. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

Section 658G of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858e) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 658G. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

“(a) RESERVATION.—

“(1) RESERVATION FOR ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter for a fiscal year referred to in paragraph (2) shall reserve and use a portion of such funds, in accordance with paragraph (2), for activities provided directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities, that are designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care, and is in alignment with a Statewide assessment of the State’s needs to carry out such services and care, provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(2) AMOUNT OF RESERVATIONS.—Such State shall reserve and use—

“(A) to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1), not less than—

“(i) 7 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first and second full fiscal years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014;

“(ii) 8 percent of such funds for the third and fourth full fiscal years after the date of enactment; and

“(iii) 9 percent of such funds for the fifth and each succeeding full fiscal year after the date of enactment; and

“(B) in addition to the funds reserved under subparagraph (A), 3 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1) received not later than the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment and received for each succeeding full fiscal year, to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b)(4), as such activities relate to the quality of care for infants and toddlers.

“(3) STATE RESERVATION AMOUNT.—Nothing in this subsection shall preclude the State from reserving a larger percentage of funds to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b).

“(b) ACTIVITIES.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to carry out no fewer than one of the following activities that will improve the quality of child care services provided in the State:

“(1) Supporting the training and professional development of the child care workforce through activities such as those included under section 658E(c)(2)(G), in addition to—

“(A) offering training and professional development opportunities for child care providers that relate to the use of scientifically-based, developmentally-appropriate and age-appropriate strategies to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those related to

nutrition and physical activity, and offering specialized training for child care providers caring for those populations prioritized in section 658E(c)(2)(Q), and children with disabilities;

“(B) incorporating the effective use of data to guide program improvement;

“(C) including effective behavior management strategies and training, including positive behavior interventions and support models, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors, including reducing expulsions of preschool-aged children for such behaviors;

“(E) providing training and outreach on engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children’s positive development;

“(F) providing training corresponding to the nutritional and physical activity needs of children to promote healthy development;

“(G) providing training or professional development for child care providers regarding the early neurological development of children; and

“(H) connecting child care staff members of child care providers with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, that would assist child care staff members in pursuing relevant postsecondary training.

“(2) Improving upon the development or implementation of the early learning and developmental guidelines described in section 658E(c)(2)(T) by providing technical assistance to eligible child care providers that enhances the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development, including early childhood development, of participating preschool and school-aged children and supports their overall well-being.

“(3) Developing, implementing, or enhancing a tiered quality rating system for child care providers and services, which may—

“(A) support and assess the quality of child care providers in the State;

“(B) build on State licensing standards and other State regulatory standards for such providers;

“(C) be designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers and services;

“(D) describe the safety of child care facilities;

“(E) build the capacity of State early childhood programs and communities to promote parents’ and families’ understanding of the State’s early childhood system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled;

“(F) provide, to the maximum extent practicable, financial incentives and other supports designed to expand the full diversity of child care options and help child care providers improve the quality of services; and

“(G) accommodate a variety of distinctive approaches to early childhood education and care, including but not limited to, those practiced in faith-based settings, community-based settings, child-centered settings, or similar settings that offer a distinctive approach to early childhood development.

“(4) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers through activities, which may include—

“(A) establishing or expanding high-quality community or neighborhood-based family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order to improve the quality of early childhood services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality, age-appropriate care to infants and toddlers from low-income families;

“(B) establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks;

“(C) promoting and expanding child care providers’ ability to provide developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers through training and professional development; coaching and technical assistance on this age group’s unique needs from statewide networks of qualified infant-toddler specialists; and improved coordination with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(D) if applicable, developing infant and toddler components within the State’s quality rating system described in paragraph (3) for child care providers for infants and toddlers, or the development of infant and toddler components in a State’s child care licensing regulations or early learning and development guidelines;

“(E) improving the ability of parents to access transparent and easy to understand consumer information about high-quality infant and toddler care; and

“(F) carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler cognitive and physical development, or infant and toddler well-being, including providing health and safety training (including training in safe sleep practices, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for providers and caregivers.

“(5) Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services.

“(6) Facilitating compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State licensing standards.

“(7) Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State, including evaluating how such programs positively impact children.

“(8) Supporting child care providers in the voluntary pursuit of accreditation by a national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality.

“(9) Supporting State or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development.

“(10) Carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of child care services provided in the State, and for which measurement of outcomes relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or entry to kindergarten is possible.

“(c) CERTIFICATION.—Beginning with fiscal year 2016, at the beginning of each fiscal year, the State shall annually submit to the Secretary a certification containing an assurance that the State was in compliance with subsection (a) during the preceding fiscal year and a description of how the State used funds received under this subchapter to comply with subsection (a) during that preceding fiscal year.

“(d) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Each State receiving funds under this subchapter shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Secretary, which shall include information about—

“(1) the amount of funds that are reserved under subsection (a);

“(2) the activities carried out under this section; and

“(3) the measures that the State will use to evaluate the State’s progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State.

“(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall offer technical assistance, in accordance with section 658I(a)(3), which may include technical assistance through the use of grants or cooperative agreements, to States for the activities described in subsection (b) at the request of the State.

“(f) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to regulate, direct, dictate, or place conditions (outside of what is required by this subchapter) on a State adopting specific State child care quality activities or progress in implementing those activities.”.

SEC. 7. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 658G the following:

“SEC. 658H. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter shall have in effect—

“(1) requirements, policies, and procedures to require and conduct criminal background checks for child care staff members (including prospective child care staff members) of child care providers described in subsection (c)(1); and

“(2) licensing, regulation, and registration requirements, as applicable, that prohibit the employment of child care staff members as described in subsection (c).

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—A criminal background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

“(1) a search of the State criminal and sex offender registry or repository in the State where the child care staff member resides, and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years;

“(2) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in the State where the child care staff member resides, and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years;

“(3) a search of the National Crime Information Center;

“(4) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and

“(5) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.).

“(c) PROHIBITIONS.—

“(1) CHILD CARE STAFF MEMBERS.—A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider that is receiving assistance under this subchapter if such individual—

“(A) refuses to consent to the criminal background check described in subsection (b);

“(B) knowingly makes a materially false statement in connection with such criminal background check;

“(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); or

“(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

“(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) child abuse or neglect;

“(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

“(iv) spousal abuse;
 “(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;
 “(vi) kidnapping;
 “(vii) arson;
 “(viii) physical assault or battery; or
 “(ix) subject to subsection (e)(4), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or

“(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

“(2) CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.—A child care provider described in subsection (i)(1) shall be ineligible for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter if the provider employs a staff member who is ineligible for employment under paragraph (1).

“(d) SUBMISSION OF REQUESTS FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A child care provider covered by subsection (c) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a criminal background check described in subsection (b), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

“(2) STAFF MEMBERS.—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who became a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the last day described in subsection (j)(1); and

“(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(3) PROSPECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS.—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

“(B) not less than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(4) BACKGROUND CHECK FOR ANOTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—A child care provider shall not be required to submit a request under paragraph (2) or (3) for a child care staff member if—

“(A) the staff member received a background check described in subsection (b)—

“(i) within 5 years before the latest date on which such a submission may be made; and

“(ii) while employed by or seeking employment by another child care provider within the State;

“(B) the State provided to the first provider a qualifying background check result, consistent with this subchapter, for the staff member; and

“(C) the staff member is employed by a child care provider within the State, or has been separated from employment from a child care provider within the State for a period of not more than 180 consecutive days.

“(e) BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS AND APPEALS.—

“(1) BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS.—The State shall carry out the request of a child care provider for a criminal background check as expeditiously as possible, but not to exceed 45 days after the date on which such request was submitted, and shall provide the results of the criminal background check to such provider and to the current or prospective staff member.

“(2) PRIVACY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State shall provide the results of the criminal background check to the provider in a statement that indicates whether a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) is eligible or ineligible for employment described in subsection (c), without revealing any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding the individual.

“(B) INELIGIBLE STAFF MEMBER.—If the child care staff member is ineligible for such employment due to the background check, the State will, when providing the results of the background check, include information related to each disqualifying crime, in a report to the staff member or prospective staff member.

“(C) PUBLIC RELEASE OF RESULTS.—No State shall publicly release or share the results of individual background checks, except States may release aggregated data by crime as listed under subsection (c)(1)(D) from background check results, as long as such data is not personally identifiable information.

“(3) APPEALS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a criminal background check conducted under this section to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report.

“(B) APPEALS PROCESS.—The State shall ensure that—

“(i) each child care staff member shall be given notice of the opportunity to appeal;

“(ii) a child care staff member will receive instructions about how to complete the appeals process if the child care staff member wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report; and

“(iii) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member.

“(4) REVIEW.—The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) disqualified for a crime specified in subsection (c)(1)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment described in subsection (c)(1), notwithstanding subsection (c). The review process shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(5) NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action if a provider has acted in accordance with this section.

“(f) FEES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—Fees that a State may charge for the costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check as required by this section shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the processing and administration.

“(g) TRANSPARENCY.—The State must ensure that the policies and procedures under section 658H are published on the Web site (or otherwise publicly available venue in the absence of a Web site) of the State and the Web sites of local lead agencies.

“(h) CONSTRUCTION.—

“(1) DISQUALIFICATION FOR OTHER CRIMES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a State from disqualifying individuals as child care staff members based on their conviction for crimes not specifically listed in this section that bear upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(2) RIGHTS AND REMEDIES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter or

otherwise affect the rights and remedies provided for child care staff members residing in a State that disqualifies individuals as child care staff members for crimes not specifically provided for under this section.

“(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘child care provider’ means a center-based child care provider, a family child care provider, or another provider of child care services for compensation and on a regular basis that—

“(A) is not an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided; and

“(B) is licensed, regulated, or registered under State law or receives assistance provided under this subchapter; and

“(2) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual (other than an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided)—

“(A) who is employed by a child care provider for compensation; or

“(B) whose activities involve the care or supervision of children for a child care provider or unsupervised access to children who are cared for or supervised by a child care provider.

“(j) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives funds under this subchapter shall meet the requirements of this section for the provision of criminal background checks for child care staff members described in subsection (d)(1) not later than the last day of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

“(2) EXTENSION.—The Secretary may grant a State an extension of time, of not more than 1 fiscal year, to meet the requirements of this section if the State demonstrates a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of this section.

“(3) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—Except as provided in paragraphs (1) and (2), for any fiscal year that a State fails to comply substantially with the requirements of this section, the Secretary shall withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the following fiscal year.”

SEC. 8. REPORTS AND INFORMATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Section 658I(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858g(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting a comma after “publish”; and

(B) by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) provide technical assistance, such as business technical assistance, as described in section 658E(c)(2)(V), to States (which may include providing assistance on a reimbursable basis) which shall be provided by qualified experts on practices grounded in scientifically valid research, where appropriate, to carry out this subchapter;” and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) disseminate, for voluntary informational purposes, information on practices that scientifically valid research indicates are most successful in improving the quality of programs that receive assistance with this subchapter; and

“(5) after consultation with the heads of any other Federal agencies involved, issue guidance and disseminate information on best practices regarding the use of funding combined by States as described in section 658E(c)(2)(O)(ii), consistent with laws other than this subchapter.”

(b) REQUEST FOR RELIEF.—Section 658I of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858g), as amended by

subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end of the following:

“(C) REQUEST FOR RELIEF.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may waive for a period of not more than three years any provision under this subchapter or sanctions imposed upon a State in accordance with subsection (b)(2) upon the State’s request for such a waiver if the Secretary finds that—

“(A) the request describes one or more conflicting or duplicative requirements preventing the effective delivery of child care services to justify a waiver, extraordinary circumstances, such as natural disaster or financial crisis, or an extended period of time for a State legislature to enact legislation to implement the provisions of this subchapter;

“(B) such circumstances included in the request prevent the State from complying with any statutory or regulatory requirements of this subchapter;

“(C) the waiver will, by itself, contribute to or enhance the State’s ability to carry out the purposes of this subchapter; and,

“(D) the waiver will not contribute to inconsistency with the objectives of this law.

“(2) CONTENTS.—Such request shall be provided to the Secretary in writing and will—

“(A) detail each sanction or provision within this subchapter that the State seeks relief from;

“(B) describe how a waiver from that sanction or provision of this subchapter will, by itself, improve delivery of child care services for children in the State; and

“(C) certify that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received under this subchapter will not be compromised as a result of the waiver.

“(3) APPROVAL.—Within 90 days after the receipt of a State’s request under this subsection, the Secretary shall inform the State of approval or disapproval of the request. If the plan is disapproved, the Secretary shall, at this time, inform the State, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate of the reasons for the disapproval and give the State the opportunity to amend the request. In the case of approval, the Secretary shall, within 30 days of granting such waiver, notify and submit a report to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate on the circumstances of the waiver including each specific sanction or provision waived, the reason as given by the State of the need for a waiver, and the expected impact of the waiver on children served under this program.

“(4) EXTERNAL CONDITIONS.—The Secretary shall not require or impose any new or additional requirements in exchange for receipt of a waiver if such requirements are not specified in this subchapter.

“(5) DURATION.—The Secretary may approve a request under this subsection for a period not to exceed three years, unless a renewal is granted under paragraph (7).

“(6) TERMINATION.—The Secretary shall terminate approval of a request for a waiver authorized under this subsection if the Secretary determines, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, that the performance of a State granted relief under this subsection has been inadequate, or if such relief is no longer necessary to achieve its original purposes.

“(7) RENEWAL.—The Secretary may approve or disapprove a request from a State for renewal of an existing waiver under this subchapter for a period no longer than one year. A State seeking to renew their waiver approval must inform the Secretary of this

intent no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date of the waiver. The State shall recertify in its extension request the provisions in paragraph (2) of this subchapter, and shall also explain the need for additional time of relief from such sanction(s) or provisions approved under this law as provided in this subchapter.

“(8) RESTRICTIONS.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to permit States to alter the eligibility requirements for eligible children, including work requirements, job training, or educational program participation, that apply to the parents of eligible children under this subchapter. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to allow the Secretary to waive anything related to his or her authority under this subchapter.”.

(c) REPORTS.—Section 658K(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) in clause (ix), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (x), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(xi) whether the children receiving assistance under this subchapter are homeless children;”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “December 31, 1997” and all that follows through “thereafter”, and inserting “1 year after the date of the enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and annually thereafter.”;

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “section 658P(5)” and inserting “section 658P(6)”;

(C) in subparagraph (E) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) the number of child fatalities occurring among children while in the care and facility of child care providers receiving assistance under this subchapter, listed by type of child care provider and indicating whether the providers (excluding child care providers described in section 658P(6)(B)) are licensed or license-exempt.”.

(d) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—Section 658L of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858j) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

“SEC. 658L. REPORTS, HOTLINE, AND WEB SITE.”;

(2) by striking “Not later” and inserting the following:

“(a) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—Not later”;

(3) by striking “1998” and inserting “2016”;

(4) by striking “to the Committee” and all that follows through “of the Senate” and inserting “to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate”;

(5) by inserting after “States.” the following:

“Such report shall contain a determination around whether each State that uses amounts provided under this subchapter has complied with the priority for services described in sections 658E(c)(2)(Q) and 658E(c)(3)(B).”; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate, directly or through the use of grants or contracts, a national toll-free hotline and Web site, to—

“(A) develop and disseminate publicly available child care consumer education information for parents and help parents access safe and quality child care services in

their community, with a range of price options, that best suits their family’s needs; and

“(B) to allow persons to report (anonymously if desired) suspected child abuse or neglect, or violations of health and safety requirements, by an eligible child care provider that receives assistance under this subchapter or a member of the provider’s staff.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the hotline and Web site meet the following requirements:

“(A) REFERRAL TO LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.—The Web site shall be hosted by ‘childcare.gov’. The Web site shall enable a child care consumer to enter a zip code and obtain a referral to local child care providers described in subparagraph (B) within a specified search radius.

“(B) INFORMATION.—The Web site shall provide to consumers, directly or through linkages to State databases, at a minimum—

“(i) a localized list of all eligible child care providers, differentiating between licensed and license-exempt providers;

“(ii) any provider-specific information from a Quality Rating and Improvement System or information about other quality indicators, to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iii) any other provider-specific information about compliance with licensing, and health and safety requirements to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iv) referrals to local resource and referral organizations from which consumers can find more information about child care providers; and

“(v) State information about child care subsidy programs and other financial supports available to families.

“(C) NATIONWIDE CAPACITY.—The Web site and hotline shall have the capacity to help families in every State and community in the Nation.

“(D) INFORMATION AT ALL HOURS.—The Web site shall provide, to parents and families, access to information about child care services 24 hours a day.

“(E) SERVICES IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.—The Web site and hotline shall ensure the widest possible access to services for families who speak languages other than English.

“(F) HIGH-QUALITY CONSUMER EDUCATION AND REFERRAL.—The Web site and hotline shall ensure that families have access to easy-to-understand child care consumer education and referral services.

“(3) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to allow the Secretary to compel States to provide additional data and information that is currently (as of the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014) not publicly available, or is not required by this subchapter, unless such additional data are related to the purposes and scope of this subchapter, and are subject to a notice and comment period of no less than 90 days.”.

(e) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—Section 658K(a)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not contain personally identifiable information.”.

SEC. 9. RESERVATION FOR TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE; PAYMENTS TO BENEFIT INDIAN CHILDREN; TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION.

Section 658O of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858m) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—
 (A) in paragraph (2)—
 (i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;
 (ii) by striking “1 percent, and not more than 2 percent,” and inserting “2 percent”;
 and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:
 “(B) LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall only reserve an amount that is greater than 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 658B, for payments described in subparagraph (A), for a fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the ‘reservation year’) if—

“(i) the amount appropriated under section 658B for the reservation year is greater than the amount appropriated under section 658B for fiscal year 2014; and

“(ii) the Secretary ensures that the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for the reservation year is not less than the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for fiscal year 2014.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:
 “(3) NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.—The Secretary shall reserve up to \$1,500,000 of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year for the operation of a national toll-free hotline and Web site, under section 658L(b).

“(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall reserve up to ½ of 1 percent of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year to support technical assistance and dissemination activities under paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 658I(a).

“(5) RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION, AND EVALUATION.—The Secretary may reserve ½ of 1 percent of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year to conduct research and demonstration activities, as well as periodic external, independent evaluations of the impact of the program described by this subchapter on increasing access to child care services and improving the safety and quality of child care services, using scientifically valid research methodologies, and to disseminate the key findings of those evaluations widely and on a timely basis.”; and

(2) in subsection (c)—
 (A) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) LICENSING AND STANDARDS.—In lieu of any licensing and regulatory requirements applicable under State or local law, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall develop minimum child care standards that shall be applicable to Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving assistance under this subchapter. Such standards shall appropriately reflect Indian tribe and tribal organization needs and available resources, and shall include standards requiring a publicly available application, health and safety standards, and standards requiring a reservation of funds for activities to improve the quality of child care services provided to Indian children.”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) LIMITATION.—
 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary may not permit an Indian tribe or tribal organization to use amounts provided under this subsection for construction or renovation if the use will result in a decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization as compared to the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization in the fiscal year preceding the year for which the determination under subparagraph (B) is being made.

“(ii) WAIVER.—The Secretary shall waive the limitation described in clause (i) if—

“(I) the Secretary determines that the decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization is temporary; and

“(II) the Indian tribe or tribal organization submits to the Secretary a plan that demonstrates that after the date on which the construction or renovation is completed—

“(aa) the level of child care services will increase; or

“(bb) the quality of child care services will improve.”.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.

Section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(3) CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.—The term ‘child with a disability’ means—

“(A) a child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401);

“(B) a child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(C) a child who is less than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794); and

“(D) a child with a disability, as defined by the State involved.

“(4) ELIGIBLE CHILD.—The term ‘eligible child’ means an individual—

“(A) who is less than 13 years of age;

“(B) whose family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size, and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family); and

“(C) who—
 “(i) resides with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program; or

“(ii) is receiving, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in clause (i).”;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (9) as paragraphs (6) through (10), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4), the following:

“(5) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term ‘English learner’ means an individual who is limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801 or section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832).”;

(4) in paragraph (6)(A), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(E)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(F)”;

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”;

(5) in paragraph (9), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking “designated” and all that follows and inserting “designated or established under section 658D(a).”;

(6) in paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by inserting “, foster parent,” after “guardian”;

(7) by redesignating paragraphs (11) through (14) as paragraphs (12) through (15), respectively; and

(8) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), the following:

“(11) SCIENTIFICALLY VALID RESEARCH.—The term ‘scientifically valid research’ includes applied research, basic research, and field-initiated research, for which the rationale, design, and interpretation are soundly developed in accordance with principles of scientific research.”.

SEC. 11. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 658Q of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858o) is amended—

(1) by inserting before “Nothing” the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PARENTAL RIGHTS TO USE CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed in a manner—

“(1) to favor or promote the use of grants and contracts for the receipt of child care services under this subchapter over the use of child care certificates; or

“(2) to disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”.

SEC. 12. STUDIES ON WAITING LISTS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct studies to determine, for each State, the number of families that—

(1) are eligible to receive assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

(2) have applied for the assistance, identified by the type of assistance requested; and

(3) have been placed on a waiting list for the assistance.

(b) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall prepare a report containing the results of each study and shall submit the report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate, and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives—

(1) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) every 2 years thereafter.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “State” has the meaning given the term in section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n).

SEC. 13. REVIEW OF FEDERAL EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, shall conduct an interdepartmental review of all early learning and care programs for children less than 6 years of age in order to—

(1) develop a plan for the elimination of overlapping programs, as identified by the Government Accountability Office’s 2012 annual report (GAO-12-342SP); and

(2) make recommendations to Congress for streamlining all such programs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of all Federal agencies that administer Federal early learning and care programs, shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, a detailed report that outlines the efficiencies that can be achieved by, as well as specific recommendations for, eliminating overlap and fragmentation among all Federal early learning and care programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may

have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1086.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 1086, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

Mr. Speaker, across the country countless men and women are trying to build a better life for their families. Some are working more for less in order to make ends meet; others are pursuing a degree at a local university or improving their skills at a nearby community college.

Whether going to work or school, most parents face a difficult question: Who will care for my child? Is there a trusted child care provider who will keep my son or daughter safe? And if there is, can I afford it?

For nearly two decades, the Child Care and Development Block Grant program has helped low-income families answer these tough questions. The program funds State efforts to provide vulnerable families access to child care. Parents receive assistance in the form of a voucher or certificate to pay the child care provider of their choice.

Approximately 1.5 million children under the age of 13 are in a child care arrangement funded through the program, including over 25,000 children in my home State of Minnesota. It is a vital safety net for moms and dads trying to lift their families out of poverty.

At a hearing held earlier this year, one witness told the story of a woman named Rita. Speaking of the Child Care and Development Block Grant program, Rita said: "These Federal investments were quite a serious lifeline for me. I know where I came from, and I do not want to go back."

Rita's experience is shared by many Americans. Yet despite the importance of the program, it has been almost 20 years since Congress reformed the law. As with any Federal program left on autopilot, problems will emerge, and this program is no different.

Poor coordination across related services and a lack of information make it difficult for parents looking for the best provider to know the full range of options. Perhaps most troubling, a patchwork of State licensing, monitoring, and related safety requirements means some children aren't protected like they should be.

These families deserve better, which is why I am proud to support this important legislation. The bill before us includes a number of commonsense reforms that will strengthen the program and our support of these at-risk families.

For example, the legislation requires all participating child care providers to undergo, at a minimum, an annual inspection to ensure compliance with health, safety, and fire standards. The

bill enhances existing training for providers and their workers; so every child is under the care of a well-trained professional.

The legislation also reins in the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to prevent this and future administrations from writing onerous rules that would limit access to this important service.

Mr. Speaker, we have a long way to go before every American enjoys the opportunity and prosperity they and their family deserve. By supporting this bipartisan legislation, we have a chance to help these families succeed and set their children on the path to a bright future.

Before closing, I would like to recognize a number of my colleagues who helped make this legislative achievement possible, including Senators TOM HARKIN and LAMAR ALEXANDER, the chairman and senior Republican on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

I would also like to thank the senior Democrat on the Education and the Workforce Committee, GEORGE MILLER, and Representatives TODD ROKITA and DAVID LOEBSACK.

Last, but certainly not least, Senators RICHARD BURR and BARBARA MIKULSKI laid the foundation for the bipartisan, bicameral agreement we are discussing today, and we are all grateful for their years of dedication to this really important issue.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we would not be here today were it not for the hard work and dedication of our staff. I wish time permitted an opportunity to recognize each and every one of them. We are forever grateful for their service.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion to pass S. 1086, as amended. This bill represents a bipartisan, bicameral agreement to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant, or CCDBG, which is the largest funding source for child care programs. It has been almost 20 years since this CCDBG was reauthorized, and working families and young children should not have to wait any longer.

This block grant provides Federal resources to States to help low-income families pay for child care while a parent works or is in an educational or job training program. This program supports self-sufficiency and promotes workforce stability.

Just as important, this funding offers children vital early learning experiences that set them on a path toward success in school, in the workforce, and the rest of their lives. However, the current law, besides being outdated, has some limitations in ensuring low-income children access to this important program.

For example, the law currently has very few specific requirements on the

quality of child care, and States have significant latitude to set quality standards. This results in a great deal of low-quality child care being funded. Recent research has found that about only one-third of child care programs funded by the block grant is actually of good quality.

□ 1645

Access is another concern. Only one in six children eligible for the program is actually enrolled.

This reauthorization seeks to address these problems by improving child care access, making critical new investments, and helping to ensure that children are safe and receive quality care.

For example, this bill increases the number of funds that States must spend on activities to improve the quality of child care, including care for infants and toddlers. It also requires States to conduct a statewide assessment of their needs for quality improvement and to align their quality initiatives with the results of that assessment.

The bill provides States with nearly a dozen proven initiatives that they can deploy to improve quality, ranging from training and professional development to quality rating systems and health and nutrition policies.

The bill also adds State requirements on training and professional development for child care providers, for child-to-staff ratios, annual inspections for providers that receive Federal assistance, coordination with other federally funded early childhood programs, the development and maintenance of early learning and development guidelines, and background checks to keep violent and sexual offenders away from our Nation's children.

This bill expands the requirements for health and safety, and consumer education, including funding for a toll free hotline and a Web site to report suspected child abuse or safety violations.

This legislation also improves access to care by expanding the eligibility of participating families to at least a year, regardless of changes in their income or work schedules or training or educational status. It prioritizes services for families with the lowest incomes. It eases enrollment requirements for homeless children. It helps families connect with quality programs and reduces expulsions from early childhood learning programs by training providers about positive behavior supports and interventions with young children. Finally, it enhances the transparency of the cost of care.

This important legislative update to the CCDBG is long overdue. Improvements made by this legislation are critical for millions of children and their families, and for the future of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs.

McMORRIS RODGERS), the chairwoman of the Republican Conference and a member of our leadership team.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, the ranking members, and everyone on both sides for their tremendous work on this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, right before the August recess the Republican women of the House joined together to highlight a family empowerment package, of which this bill is a critical piece, and I am proud to stand here and say that we are passing another bill in that agenda that empowers women and families.

Women now make up nearly half of our workforce, and in many cases they are the primary breadwinners and the heads of their households. Yet so many of our labor laws and workplace laws were written at a different time—at a time when very few women worked. As moms and dads are seeking their way to get back to where they were after a stagnant economic time, work and job training programs are so important. Moms and dads across the country are still worried about paying their bills, affording the costs needed at home, and securing their kids' futures. They need help, and that is what this bill does.

It empowers and supports families who are seeking better lives for their families. It allows them peace of mind about their children's safety and well-being while they are at work, allowing parents to focus on securing a better future. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Chairman KLINE's amendment in the nature of a substitute to S. 1086.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant, or the CCDBG, is an indispensable resource for millions of children and families nationwide. This enables parents to send their kids to safe, high-quality, and affordable child care so they can work or attend training programs or provide for their families. Meanwhile, the program helps place children in the sorts of environments they need for healthy growth and development.

However, it has been almost 20 years since last we updated this program. In that time, we have learned that we need to do more to ensure that children receive high-quality care in safe settings. That is why this vote is so very important. That is why I am so pleased to have reached bipartisan-bicameral consensus on this legislation.

I would like to thank all of the organizations for their support of this legislation in the process of finalizing this legislation, which has been done over the last several weeks. This bill is not on suspension because it is unimportant; it is on suspension because we recognize the urgency of getting this done this year, and we also recognize a growing national bipartisan consensus about the value of children being placed in high-quality, safe environments during their early learning years.

I would like to include letters from the following organizations: Save the Children; Child Care Aware of America; the National Women's Law Center; the Center For Law and Social Policy; Zero to Three; the Early Care and Education Consortium; the National Association for the Education of Young Children; the Children's Defense Fund; the National Education Association; and the American Federation of Teachers.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than 1.6 million members of the American Federation of Teachers—including approximately 90,000 early childhood education professionals who work in diverse settings, such as preschool classrooms, family child care, child care centers, Head Start and Early Head Start—I urge you to support, as amended, S. 1086, the bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

The CCDBG helps low-income parents pay for child care so they can work or pursue an education. S. 1086 guarantees a family's child care eligibility for at least 12 months, regardless of any fluctuation in income, job or education. This offers a vital lifeline and a path to the middle class for millions of families across the nation.

It has been nearly 20 years since the CCDBG was last reauthorized. Since that time, early childhood education and child care programs have been transformed by research on child development. This bill reflects the advancement of this knowledge and will truly modernize the program.

S. 1086 brings child care standards into this century by focusing on the health and safety of children, and by giving parents more confidence that their child is being well cared for while they are at work or school. In addition, the bill ensures our youngest and most vulnerable are safe by making inspections annual and requiring that all providers and employees obtain background checks and training before they care for children. S. 1086 also makes all this information more transparent and available to the public, especially to parents and family members.

This bill acknowledges that a component of a high-quality child care program includes having a workforce that is well-prepared and well-trained. This bill requires states to establish a professional development progression and dedicate more funding for training, professional development and advancement of the child care workforce. In particular, the bill, as amended, also addresses the latest data on expulsions from early education programs by requiring that part of the staff

training focuses on child behavioral supports. The training and professional development requirements not only will benefit educators and staff working in child care, but also will have lasting, positive effects for the children in their care and those children's families.

However, while this bill is a significant first step toward providing every child in our nation with a high-quality early learning and care program, we know we can't do it right on the cheap. Without the necessary federal resources to implement these important health and safety standards and trainings, states either will be unable to increase the quality of child care and education or will simply have to cut access to high-quality child care to children and families that need it the most. States should not have to choose between quality and access. We look forward to working with Congress to pass this legislation and secure the resources needed for its successful implementation.

Finally, we are equally committed to partnering with Congress to expand high-quality early education for all children from birth to kindergarten.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this matter. The AFT urges you to vote yes when S. 1086 comes to the House floor.

Sincerely,

RANDI WEINGARTEN,
President.

SAVE THE CHILDREN,
September 14, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN KLINE AND RANKING MEMBER MILLER: On behalf of Save the Children, the leading independent organization dedicated to creating real and lasting change in the lives of children in need in the United States and around the world, we are proud to support your efforts to improve the safety, health and quality of child care through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. As you well know, Save the Children has dedicated nearly a century of service in America to helping children affected by disasters. And we have valued our tremendous partnership with you to make sure children's safety in emergencies remains a priority—particularly in the child care setting.

We support the proposed CCDBG improvements focused on safety, health and quality improvements. In particular, with 69 million children separated from their parents every work day, we support and commend your inclusion of the disaster preparedness section and disaster plan components §5(u)(iii) which are in line with the recommendations from the National Commission on Children and Disasters which serve as the basis for Save the Children's annual report card on children and disasters, now in its seventh year.

We applaud your leadership on keeping children safe in emergencies and thank you for all you have done and continue to do to create lasting positive change in the lives of children.

Sincerely,

RICHARD BLAND,
National Director, Policy & Advocacy,
U.S. Programs, Save the Children.

CHILD CARE AWARE OF AMERICA,
Arlington, VA, September 15, 2014.

Hon. TOM HARKIN,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Edu-
cation, Labor and Pensions, Washington,
DC.

Hon. BARBARA MIKULSKI,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions, Wash-
ington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD BURR,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Chairman, House Education and the Workforce
Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
Ranking Member, House Education and the
Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. TODD ROKITA,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. DAVE LOEBSACK,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HARKIN, RANKING MEMBER ALEXANDER, SENATOR MIKULSKI, AND SENATOR BURR, CHAIRMAN KLINE, RANKING MEMBER MILLER, REPRESENTATIVE ROKITA, AND REPRESENTATIVE LOEBSACK: I am writing on behalf of Child Care Aware® of America (formerly the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, NACCRRA) to express support for your legislation, the Child Care & Development Block Grant Act of 2014, which would reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant and would better protect the health and improve safety of children in child care settings across America.

Families want their children to be safe in child care. They reasonably assume that a child care license means the state has approved some minimum level of protection for children and that the program will promote their healthy development. Our nationwide polling shows that parents also believe there is oversight by the state. However, most state licensing requirements are weak and oversight is weaker.

For over 15 years, reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant has been Child Care Aware® of America's top legislative priority and we have been working on both the federal and state levels to improve the quality of child care.

Child Care Aware® of America has issued seven licensing studies that show state laws regarding child care settings vary greatly. The most recent report, We Can Do Better: 2013 Update, scored and ranked the states on their child care center program requirements and oversight policies. The average score was 92 out of a total possible score of 150—for a grade of 61 percent.

Children's early years are proven to be the most impactful time to create strong learners. This reauthorization bill is a huge step to move the nation forward ensuring children are safe and receiving the best early learning experiences while in child care. This bill sets the standard all families expect for their children by requiring providers to undergo comprehensive background checks, annual and pre-licensure inspections, and training.

This bill includes significant measures to improve the quality of child care and ensure that all children in child care settings are safe.

Child Care Aware® of America looks forward to working with you to pass this legislation into law. Thank you for your continued leadership in support of our nation's children.

Sincerely,

LYNETTE M. FRAGA, PH.D.,
Executive Director.

L. CAROL SCOTT, PH.D.,
President, Board of
Directors.

MICHELLE NOTH
MCCREADY,
Director of Policy.

NICHOLAS P. VUCIC,
Senior Government Af-
fairs Associate.

CHILDCARE AWARE OF VIRGINIA,
Richmond, VA, September 15, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
Ranking Member, U.S. House Education and
the Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MILLER: As Executive Director of Child Care Aware of Virginia, a nonprofit statewide child care resource and referral network, I am writing to thank you and to express full support for the bipartisan, bicameral legislation to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

As an organization that works every day to assist parents in finding child care and to assist child care providers in offering quality child care settings, I see first-hand both the demand for and the need for quality child care. Over Labor Day weekend, the Washington Post ran several stories about the deaths of 60 children in child care in Virginia, 43 in unlicensed care over the past several years. When any child dies it is certainly a tragedy, but it is a double tragedy when you know that the deaths could be prevented by better training for child care providers and more oversight from states.

The bicameral, bipartisan, Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act will combine important safety protections for children in child care with more accountability for the expenditure of public dollars.

I commend your leadership and the efforts of Chairman John Kline, Representative Todd Rokita, and Representative David Loebsack as well as the leadership of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee for setting aside partisan politics and reaching agreement on CCDBG reauthorization to ensure that children are safe in child care. Parents want quality child care. The reauthorization bill is the right policy to both ensure children's safety and strengthen the quality of the workforce.

Choices among quality child care settings is critical for working parents. This legislation is an important milestone in support of working families. Thank you for all that you do in support of working families with children.

Sincerely,

SHARON VEATCH,
Executive Director.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER,
Washington, DC, September 12, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER MILLER: The National Women's Law Center is pleased that the U.S. House of Representatives is moving forward with the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. Your leadership has resulted in a reauthorization bill that would improve the safety, quality, and accessibility of child care and after-school care for children from birth to age 13. High-quality, well-funded child care helps families work and children learn—both of which are important goals for the nation.

Since the last reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant in 1996, we have learned much about how to improve the quality of child care and after-school care and how to make child care assistance more accessible to families. Research on the

importance of quality has spurred greater efforts to support providers in promoting children's positive development from birth. State initiatives have shown ways to encourage quality improvements through incentives and well-designed reimbursement policies. This bill incorporates these lessons from the research and state innovations in an effort to better protect the health and safety of children in care, improve the quality of care overall and for infants and toddlers in particular, facilitate children and families' sustained access to help in paying for care and more stable child care arrangements, and support providers serving families receiving child care assistance.

We strongly support the goals of this legislation. We will work with you to obtain the funding needed to make these improvements and to allow more children to benefit from these improvements. Between 2006 and 2012, 260,000 fewer eligible children received assistance through the Child Care and Development Block Grant. In addition, most states' payment rates for child care providers are too low to support high-quality care. To reverse the decline in children served and to successfully implement the much-needed improvements included in this legislation, we urge Congress to increase mandatory and discretionary child care funding.

Thank you for all your work on this reauthorization, which is so important for our country's children and families.

Sincerely,

HELEN BLANK,
Director of Child Care
and Early Learning.

JOAN ENTMACHER,
Vice President for
Family Economic Se-
curity.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), the chairman of the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee.

Mr. ROKITA. Thank you, Chairman KLINE, for your leadership on this issue.

I also want to thank Ranking Member MILLER, Ranking Member LOEBSACK, our colleagues across the rotunda, and, of course, the staff, who put so much effort into this pro-work, pro-family bill today.

Mr. Speaker, the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program is an example of what both parties and Houses of Congress can do when we are working together to find commonsense solutions to national issues.

I came to Congress to help all people build better lives for themselves and their families, and now, here with this bill, on this floor today, we get a chance to do that. We work together to protect children's early development and safety, as well as their parents' employment, by preserving State control over a Federal program that serves over a million and a half young Americans. This agreement prevents the administration from imposing early learning guidelines on our States, and it also limits the collection of unnecessary data on our children. At the same time, we have strengthened oversight and accountability at multiple levels of government.

Early childhood care quality will improve because we are enhancing families' access to provider information

while maintaining choice of provider. Families can choose between public and private providers, including religious providers. They can choose larger institutional settings or smaller, or even in-home operations.

As a Member of Congress and as a parent, I know that parents, not the Federal Government, are best positioned to choose child care providers, and this legislation ensures parents will have power over Federal bureaucracies, which are no substitute for a family. We are holding providers to strict safety standards, making sure child care professionals have the most up-to-date training. Parents who must either be working or seeking employment in order to take advantages of this program will have better information to guide their decisions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KLINE. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I certainly didn't learn about these improvements before working on the legislation from the ether. The day nursery in Avon, Indiana, was one of my first stops, and we were able to incorporate a lot of what we learned that day and every day after in our work and into this bill.

I thank those whom I met with in the Fourth District of Indiana, where commonsense solutions are part of everyday life, for their help in getting this legislation and the content of it crafted.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, it is not only my duty to vote for good legislation but for results. Mr. Speaker, I am simply here today to ask my colleagues to vote for this legislation because it will get results. It is one of the things that we can do around here in a bipartisan-bicameral way to show the American people that we are worth our paychecks.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK).

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago I held a policy panel on Women's Economic Equality in my district, and when the audience was asked how many of you have worried about the cost of child care, nearly every hand shot up in the air.

While the skyrocketing cost of quality child care in Massachusetts is among the most expensive in the country, with an average annual cost above \$16,000, the problem is not limited to my home State. Across our country, millions of American families report child care as their highest expense—higher than rent or a college education for their children. Without a doubt, the cost of quality child care is now one of the biggest barriers to economic success facing women and families.

Knowing how critical child care is to American families, I am so heartened

to see the House take action to reauthorize the Child Care Development Block Grant program, which provides grants to States to offer quality child care that is accessible to low- and moderate-income families. I am grateful that the quality child care provisions of my bill, the Infant and Toddler Care Improvement Act, have been incorporated into this reauthorization.

As a working mom of three, I understand that parents want nothing more than when their children are in child care they are happy, learning, safe, and healthy. Millions of moms and dads across the country, however, are faced with impossible choices because of the lack of access to quality child care. More than 6 million children under the age of 3 are in care of someone other than their parents each week, and 46 percent of the children under 3 live in low-income families.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant and the quality provisions of the Infant and Toddler Care Improvement Act offer a vital lifeline and a path to the middle class for millions of families across the Nation. It is a necessary step towards true economic equality for women, and it gives our kids a great start.

Today's compromised bill is a strong first step, and I look forward to working together to strengthen access to quality child care. This vote is not controversial, nor is it partisan. It is a win for American families. I urge my colleagues to support the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, S. 1086, as amended, and I submit for the RECORD some support letters.

CLASP,
September 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KLINE AND REPRESENTATIVE MILLER: The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is pleased that the House is considering the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) seeks to improve the lives of low-income people by advocating for policies that deliver results that matter.

Child care assistance is an essential work support for low-income parents who struggle to find and keep employment to provide for their families. The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is unique among many federal programs in that its two-generation focus has the ability to support both parents' economic success and children's healthy development.

The CCDBG Act of 2014 is an important step forward for improving the health and safety of child care. It also would make crucial improvements to the program that would allow children to have more sustained access to child care assistance, which helps parents stay in their jobs and move up and supports children's development by providing more continuity in their child care arrangement. The Act seeks to improve the quality of child care overall, with a particular focus on infants and toddlers. Quality infant-toddler child care is rare and particularly out of reach for low-income families. Given the robust body of research on the importance of the earliest years of life for chil-

dren's growth and success, CLASP supports this effort to improve the quality and availability of infant-toddler care.

While we are pleased to lend our support to this legislation, we note that increasing resources for child care must also be a top Congressional priority. Our most recent analysis shows spending on child care assistance at a 10-year low. Insufficient federal funds have led states to make reductions in their child care programs, with the number of children served falling to a 14-year low. States will need additional resources to meet the goals of the legislation and to ensure that low-income families are able to retain access to this vital program. Expanding economic opportunity for low-income adults today and strengthening the foundation for their children's success in school and in life are worthy investments.

Thank you for your efforts in moving forward this important, bipartisan legislation.

Sincerely,

OLIVIA GOLDEN,
Executive Director.

ZERO TO THREE, NATIONAL CENTER
FOR INFANTS, TODDLERS, AND
FAMILIES,

September 15, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
*Chairman, Committee on Education and the
Workforce, Washington, DC.*

Hon. TODD ROKITA,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary, and Secondary Education,
Committee on Education and the Workforce,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
*Ranking Member, Committee on Education and
the Workforce, Washington, DC.*

Hon. DAVID LOEBSACK,
*Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Child-
hood, Elementary, and Secondary Edu-
cation, Committee on Education and the
Workforce, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN KLINE, RANKING MEMBER MILLER, CHAIRMAN ROKITA, AND RANKING MEMBER LOEBSACK: ZERO TO THREE appreciates your leadership in forging a bipartisan agreement that will allow the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to move forward in the House of Representatives and be enacted before the end of the 113th Congress. Your efforts will have a positive impact on a program critical not only to working parents but to the 6 million infants and toddlers who currently spend some portion of their days in child care.

I commend you for the attention paid to ensuring the health and safety of young children in child care as well as to improving providers' ability to support positive development of the children in their care. We know from research that the quality of child care—whether excellent or poor—is influential in shaping early brain development.

ZERO TO THREE lauds your inclusion of a statutory funding set-aside specifically directed toward improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers. Creating these targeted resources explicitly recognizes what we have long known: the first three years of life are of critical importance to preparing children for success in school and in life. Many of the infants and toddlers in families receiving child care subsidies are the same ones we speak of having a "word gap" and development undermined by toxic stress. High-quality care can help them overcome these obstacles. The set-aside will be a clear signal to states that quality services for infants and toddlers are an essential part of the early learning continuum needed to prevent children from falling behind long before they reach prekindergarten age.

ZERO TO THREE strongly supports the goals of this legislation to increase oversight, safety assurances, and quality initiatives for child care programs. To help realize the improvements in this bill, and in order to build the early learning system necessary to put our children on the path to school readiness, starting from birth, a greater infusion of resources is needed. As the real purchasing power of child care funding has eroded over the past few years, many fewer children have been served and provider payments have fallen to such levels that, in most states, high-quality care is largely out of reach of families whose children could most benefit.

We urge you to work with your colleagues in Congress to fulfill the promise of this bipartisan agreement by making additional investments in child care through both the annual appropriations process and through mandatory funding streams in order to provide stability in meeting the needs of the nation's families today and in the years to come.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW MELMED,
Executive Director, ZERO TO THREE.

EARLY CARE AND
EDUCATION CONSORTIUM,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.

Representative JOHN KLINE,
Washington, DC.
Representative TODD ROKITA,
Washington, DC.
Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI,
Washington, DC.
Senator TOM HARKIN,
Washington, DC.
Representative GEORGE MILLER,
Washington, DC.
Representative DAVID LOESBACK,
Washington, DC.
Senator RICHARD BURR,
Washington, DC.
Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KLINE, MILLER, ROKITA, AND LOESBACK, AND SENATORS MIKULSKI, BURR, HARKIN AND ALEXANDER, The Early Care and Education Consortium (ECEC) strongly supports the reauthorization of S. 1086, the Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG). We thank you for your leadership in this bipartisan effort to reauthorize the Act. Reauthorizing CCDBG this year will allow states to allocate increased FY2014 funding to improve access to high-quality early care and education programs for low-income children and families.

High-quality care and learning programs provide opportunities for healthy growth and development that produce positive educational achievement and high economic returns on investment through adulthood. Additionally, CCDBG serves as essential support to working families who need to ensure their children are cared for and learning in a safe and high-quality setting during parents' hours of employment, which often exceed the regular school day and extend into the evening.

As the nation's leading trade association of high-quality, non-profit and tax-paying, licensed child care centers, state child care associations, and educational services organizations, ECEC members share a commitment to high quality, meeting the needs of children from infants through school age, and supporting working families in communities across the country. Representing the voice of more than 8,200 centers operating in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, ECEC is also the largest organized alliance of licensed child care centers in the country. A substantial proportion of the children served by ECEC providers are able to access high-

quality care because of the support of CCDBG subsidy dollars.

CCDBG has not been reauthorized since 1996. We strongly urge Congressional action to enact important reforms that will directly address quality improvement, affordability, continuity of care, and cost stabilization measures that will benefit families and support providers, including:

Stronger health and safety standards for all child care programs that receive federal funding, including required annual inspections of all licensed providers, and annual fire, health and safety inspections of license-exempt, non-family providers.

Technical assistance given to providers on effective business practices;

De-linking provider reimbursement from absence policies that destabilize the cost of care for both families and providers;

Extended subsidy eligibility redetermination periods (12 months);

A new emphasis on technical assistance to providers around effective business practices, and

Increased investment in program quality, with additional activities that include wage incentives, tiered reimbursement, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, accreditation, and focus on school readiness.

Additionally, this bill will help ensure that low income families can access high quality care by benefiting from a mixed delivery model, and choosing high-quality options within their own community.

We thank you for your leadership in this bipartisan effort to reauthorize the Act, which provides a critical pathway to the middle class for serving as a highly productive workforce of today and the becoming the prepared and productive workforce of tomorrow.

Sincerely,

M.-A. LUCAS,
Executive Director.

EARLY LEARNING POLICY GROUP, LLC,
September 15, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
Ranking Member, U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MILLER, As President of the Early Learning Policy Group, I am writing to express my strong support for the bipartisan, bicameral legislation to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

The reality of today's economy is that working parents depend on child care in order to support their families. Nearly 11 million children under age 5 with working mothers spend time every week in some type of child care setting. Families, regardless of income, have trouble finding quality child care.

Child care policies vary greatly by state and until this legislation, there were no minimum health and safety protections for children. The CCDBG Reauthorization Act is truly historic. For the first time, federal policy will support the safety of children in child care by ensuring that licensed providers and those receiving a subsidy to care for low income children will be subject to a comprehensive background check, that programs will be inspected at least once a year, and that parents will have choices among quality settings through a stronger child care workforce and greater focus on activities that improve the quality of child care.

Children should be safe in child care. Parents should feel comfortable that when they choose child care for their children, providers have the training they need to offer settings that will promote the healthy development of children. The federal government should expect accountability from states that set child care policy so that federal

money is not used to support unsafe or potentially harmful settings for low income children.

I wholeheartedly commend your efforts and dedication as well as the efforts of Chairman John Kline, Representative Todd Rokita, and Representative David Loebsack along with the efforts of the Senate HELP Committee leadership—Chairman Tom Harkin, Senator Lamar Alexander, Senator Barbara Mikulski, and Senator Richard Burr, for putting aside partisan ideology and politics to agree to common sense public policy improvements to support working families who need child care.

The CCDBG Reauthorization Act is a historic policy marker to enable parents to have quality child care choices in their community. Thank you for supporting working families with children.

Sincerely,

GRACE REEF,
President, Early Learning Policy Group, LLC.

KNOWLEDGE UNIVERSE,
September 15, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Chairman, Committee on Education & the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN KLINE: Knowledge Universe enthusiastically offers its support for The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (S. 1086). The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) plays a critical role in ensuring working parents have access to a quality provider of their choice.

Knowledge Universe is honored to provide high-quality education and care to over 150,000 children across the United States who range in age from six weeks to 12 years of age. We are proud of the diverse group of children whom we serve. Approximately one-third of our children are from low-income working families who receive assistance under CCDBG. The core focus of Knowledge Universe is the quality of each child's educational experience. When parents choose our KinderCare centers, in addition to wanting their child to be safe and well-cared for, they also expect their child to receive the highest-quality educational experience possible.

In the almost two decades since Congress last reauthorized CCDBG, we as a nation have learned much more about the importance of health and safety and quality educational programming, especially for low-income children. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 makes important changes to the current CCDBG statute that support quality improvements in the early developmental and educational experiences children will receive through the program.

One of the most important changes The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 makes to current law relates to continuity of care. For children of low-income working families, the 12-month determination period for eligibility will serve as a critical element for ensuring greater consistency and better kindergarten readiness outcomes. Further, the legislation's health and safety standards requiring all programs, including those that are license-exempt, to undergo annual health, safety, and tire inspections are critical for raising the quality of care provided through CCDBG. Finally, the legislation's focus on the importance of teacher training and professional development to promote children's development and kindergarten readiness, as well as provisions that support Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, national accreditation, and tiered reimbursement are all essential elements for enabling working families to access a high-quality child care provider of their choice.

Knowledge Universe and the families whom we serve thank you for your hard work and dedication to this important CCDBG reauthorization. The quality improvements included in The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 will work to ensure that more children of low-income working families have access to a high-quality early care and learning experience that best meets their needs.

Sincerely,

CELIA HARTMAN SIMS,
Vice President, Government Relations.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,

Ranking Member, U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MILLER, As President and Chief Executive Officer of First Children's Finance in Minneapolis, Minnesota, I am writing to express full support for the bipartisan, bicameral legislation to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

Working families with young children depend on child care so that they can obtain and retain a job. At the same time, children need a safe place to be. In too many communities, quality child care is hard to find. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act will combine important safety protections for children in child care with more accountability for the expenditure of public dollars.

As you know, child care programs are small businesses. From my on the ground experience in working with child care programs, I know that many child care directors have experience in child development but have not had training in best business practices. The inclusion of business technical assistance in the reauthorization bill will lead to more programs operating in an efficient and cost effective manner. No program can offer families a quality setting unless it is fiscally sound.

I commend you as well as Chairman John Kline, Representative Todd Rokita, and Representative David Loebsack for your hard work and dedication on behalf of working families who need child care.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act is a giant step toward ensuring that parents have quality choices in their community. Thank you for supporting working families with children.

Sincerely,

GERALD M. CUTTS,
President and CEO,
First Children's Finance.

CHILDCARE RESOURCES,
September 15, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,

Ranking Member, U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MILLER, As President of Child Care Resources Inc. (CCRI), a nonprofit child care resource and referral agency in Charlotte, North Carolina, I am writing to express my strong support of the bicameral, bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act.

On July 26, 2012, I testified before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Children about the need to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant. My testimony focused on the need to improve children's safety in child care programs (through both requiring fingerprint background checks for child care providers and requiring minimum health and safety protections for children), increasing the quality set-aside, strengthening the child care workforce, conducting at least annual inspections of child care programs, as well as addressing shortcomings of the market rate survey in setting subsidy rates. I am thrilled to see that the child care reauthorization bill addresses each of these areas!

I have been in the child care resource and referral field for 30 years. For more than half of that time, I have been working to reauthorize this measure. Your efforts, along with those of Chairman John Kline, Representative Todd Rokita, and David Loebsack, and your Senate counterparts—Senate HELP Committee Chairman Tom Harkin, Ranking Member Lamar Alexander, Senator Barbara Mikulski, and Senator Richard Burr, to reach a bipartisan agreement on good policy for children in child care are truly to be commended.

Working families with young children need child care, and children need a place to be safe and a setting that promotes their healthy development. Thank you for your continuous efforts over many years on behalf of working families.

Sincerely,

JANET SINGERMAN,
President, Child Care Resources Inc.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before we close, I want to thank my colleagues in both the House and the Senate for their hard work on this legislation. In the Senate, I am particularly grateful to Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator BURR, and their staffs.

I want to thank Ranking Member MILLER and our committee staff members who have helped to steer the passage of this bill, particularly Scott Groginski, Jamie Fasteau, John Hammond, and Brian Levin.

I would like to thank Chairman KLINE and his staff members who worked hard on this bill, including Cristin Kumar, Mandy Shaumburg, and Kathlyn Ehl.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois, Congressman DANNY DAVIS, for his strong efforts to reduce early childhood expulsions, and the many advocates and stakeholders who weighed in on the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I enter for the RECORD additional letters of support.

RESULTS FOR AMERICA,
September 15, 2014.

RESULTS FOR AMERICA STATEMENT ON CCDBG REAUTHORIZATION

RFA'S MICHELE JOLIN HAILS EFFORT TO SET ASIDE FUNDS FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION, BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR USING DATA, EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

WASHINGTON.—Today, following the passage of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act in the House of Representatives, Results for America managing partner Michele Jolin issued the following statement. Jolin praised a provision in the legislation that would set aside .5% of funds for evaluating programs to improve the access to, quality, and safety of childcare services, calling it a "Moneyball" approach to government that improves outcomes for young people, their families, and communities.

Results for America applauds the passage of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act by the House, following the passage of a similar bill in the Senate earlier this year. The inclusion of dedicated funds for research and evaluation will provide vital information for improving the effectiveness of childcare. The strong bipartisan support for this bill shows that law-

makers across the aisle support leveraging less than a penny on the dollar to improve how the rest of the dollar is spent.

"Congress and the Administration are increasingly using data, evidence and evaluation to improve the lives of children, their families and communities, what we call a Moneyball approach to government. Today's reauthorization of CCDB shows that investing in what works is clearly a bipartisan way to address long-term challenges and is another positive step toward improving outcomes," said Michele Jolin, Managing Partner, Results for America.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.

House of Representatives,
Washington, DC 20515.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the students they serve, we urge you to vote YES on the Child Care and Development Block Grant (S. 1086 as amended), which is on the suspension calendar for today. Votes associated with this bill may be included in the NEA Legislative Report Card for the 113th Congress.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program helps low-income working families and parents transitioning from welfare to work find safe, supportive, caring environments for their children. It is impossible to have successful early childhood education without good childcare options. Moreover, quality childcare options help ensure that children enter school ready to learn.

S. 1086 incorporates lessons learned from research and the states, improving the likelihood that more children will enter school ready to succeed, by:

Investing in the early childhood workforce. The bill promotes workforce competency, training, and a progression of professional development designed to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children.

Focusing on early learning. States would be required to develop or implement research-based, developmentally appropriate early learning and developmental guidelines for children.

Ensuring the health and safety of children served by the program. The bill strengthens health and safety guidelines for child care providers.

S. 1086 is a good first step towards providing more comprehensive early learning opportunities for low-income children. We urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

MARY KUSLER,
Director, Government Relations.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN KLINE AND RANKING MEMBER MILLER: On behalf of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading early childhood professional association for quality learning from birth through age 8, I want to thank you for the improvements for access and quality in the reauthorization legislation for the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

When families look for child care for their children, they have two questions in mind: What programs offer the high-quality approach best for my child, and what can we afford to pay? Each day, millions of families wonder how they will pay for child care and will their children be safe and learning in the child care that they select. Employers know that child care is important to a stable and productive workforce. Child care providers want training and professional development to serve children well, and a subsidy system that will support the cost of quality and continuity of care.

NAEYC is the nation's largest early childhood program accreditor, setting standards for high-quality programs. Many child care centers and schools seek NAEYC early childhood program accreditation and the U.S. military child care centers also strive to meet our standards. We are pleased to see more attention to the quality of children's experiences and ways to help providers meet and sustain standards for health, safety and children's learning. The promise of early childhood education depends on using the research we know about how children learn and develop and providing access to those early learning experiences for all young children. Your bill makes advances in delivering on that promise, and with the resources to implement these changes and to serve more children, we will come closer to our shared goal of healthy, learning children who are ready for success in school and life.

NAEYC is particularly pleased to see in the bill: Support for quality and compensation improvements for the early childhood workforce; more focus on quality care for infants and toddlers at that crucial period of neurological development; consistency of care and assistance over a 12-month period; the use of child assessments in appropriate ways and explicit prohibition on inappropriate uses; more attention to health and safety in licensed and legally exempt from licensing providers; and an explicit mention of the use of the quality set aside funds for helping programs meet national accreditation standards of quality.

We look forward to working with you for the additional discretionary and mandatory funding that will be needed to make high-quality programs affordable to a larger share of families and to help more early-childhood programs provide superior experiences.

Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

RHIAN EVANS ALLVIN,
Executive Director.

EASTER SEALS,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Easter Seals urges you to support the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act. Easter Seals believes this legislation includes many policies that will go a long way to help families of children with disabilities to contribute to their family's financial well-being by creating more opportunities for young children to access quality child care services.

The bill recognizes the national need to expand training supports to child care providers on how to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities. This training will increase the quality of services available to all children. The National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine, From Neurons to Neighborhoods landmark report validated the overwhelming need in this area:

"Like all families with young children, those whose children have a disability or other special health care need are faced with the challenges of finding good-quality, affordable child care. But the inability or unwillingness of many child-care providers to accept children with disabilities (Berk and Berk, 1982; Chang and Teramoto 1987), transportation and other logistical problems, dif-

iculties with coordinating early intervention and child care services, and the scarcity of appropriately trained caregivers (Kelly and Booth, 1999; Klein and Sheehan, 1987, make the effort to find any child care a tremendous challenge for these families. One multisite student reported that 45 percent of mothers of an infant with a disability reported they were not planning to work because they could not find child care, and 31 percent indicated that they could not find affordable child care (Booth and Kelly 1998, 1999). The severity of the child's disability or illness greatly compounds these problems. (Breslau et al., 1982; Warfield and Hauser-Cram, 1996). Page 324"

Easter Seals affiliates across the country operate nearly 100 full-day, full-year child care programs that meet the needs of children with and without disabilities. These high quality programs are designed to foster the development of all children and support their families. There are simply too few quality choices available to working families. This bill will help increase their options.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

KATY BEH NEAS
Senior Vice President, Government Relations.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,
Washington, DC, September 15, 2014.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than 1.6 million members of the American Federation of Teachers—including approximately 90,000 early childhood education professionals who work in diverse settings, such as preschool classrooms, family child care, child care centers, Head Start and Early Head Start—I urge you to support, as amended, S. 1086, the bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

The CCDBG helps low-income parents pay for child care so they can work or pursue an education. S. 1086 guarantees a family's child care eligibility for at least 12 months, regardless of any fluctuation in income, job or education. This offers a vital lifeline and a path to the middle class for millions of families across the nation.

It has been nearly 20 years since the CCDBG was last reauthorized. Since that time, early childhood education and child care programs have been transformed by research on child development. This bill reflects the advancement of this knowledge and will truly modernize the program.

S. 1086 brings child care standards into this century by focusing on the health and safety of children, and by giving parents more confidence that their child is being well cared for while they are at work or school. In addition, the bill ensures our youngest and most vulnerable are safe by making inspections annual and requiring that all providers and employees obtain background checks and training before they care for children. S. 1086 also makes all this information more transparent and available to the public, especially to parents and family members.

This bill acknowledges that a component of a high-quality child care program includes having a workforce that is well-prepared and well-trained. This bill requires states to establish a professional development progression and dedicate more funding for training, professional development and advancement of the child care workforce. In particular, the bill, as amended, also addresses the latest data on expulsions from early education programs by requiring that part of the staff training focuses on child behavioral supports. The training and professional development requirements not only will benefit educators and staff working in child care, but also will have lasting, positive effects for the children in their care and those children's families.

However, while this bill is a significant first step toward providing every child in our nation with a high-quality early learning and care program, we know we can't do it right on the cheap. Without the necessary federal resources to implement these important health and safety standards and trainings, states either will be unable to increase the quality of child care and education or will simply have to cut access to high-quality child care to children and families that need it the most. States should not have to choose between quality and access. We look forward to working with Congress to pass this legislation and secure the resources needed for its successful implementation.

Finally, we are equally committed to partnering with Congress to expand high-quality early education for all children from birth to kindergarten.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this matter. The AFT urges you to vote yes when S. 1086 comes to the House floor.

Sincerely,

RANDI WEINGARTEN,
President.

SAVE THE CHILDREN,
September 14, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN KLINE AND RANKING MEMBER MILLER: On behalf of Save the Children, the leading independent organization dedicated to creating real and lasting change in the lives of children in need in the United States and around the world, we are proud to support your efforts to improve the safety, health and quality of child care through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. As you well know, Save the Children has dedicated nearly a century of service in America to helping children affected by disasters. And we have valued our tremendous partnership with you to make sure children's safety in emergencies remains a priority—particularly in the child care setting.

We support the proposed CCDBG improvements focused on safety, health and quality improvements. In particular, with 69 million children separated from their parents every work day, we support and commend your inclusion of the disaster preparedness section and disaster plan components §5(u)(iii) which are in line with the recommendations from the National Commission on Children and Disasters which serve as the basis for Save the Children's annual report card on children and disasters, now in its seventh year.

We applaud your leadership on keeping children safe in emergencies and thank you for all you have done and continue to do to create lasting positive change in the lives of children.

Sincerely,

RICHARD BLAND,
*National Director, Policy & Advocacy,
U.S. Programs, Save the Children.*

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER
Washington, DC, September 12, 2014.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
*House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR RANKING MEMBER MILLER: The National Women's Law Center is pleased that the U.S. House of Representatives is moving forward with the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. Your leadership has resulted in a

reauthorization bill that would improve the safety, quality, and accessibility of child care and after-school care for children from birth to age 13. High-quality, well-funded child care helps families work and children learn—both of which are important goals for the nation.

Since the last reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant in 1996, we have learned much about how to improve the quality of child care and after-school care and how to make child care assistance more accessible to families. Research on the importance of quality has spurred greater efforts to support providers in promoting children's positive development from birth. State initiatives have shown ways to encourage quality improvements through incentives and well-designed reimbursement policies. This bill incorporates these lessons from the research and state innovations in an effort to better protect the health and safety of children in care, improve the quality of care overall and for infants and toddlers in particular, facilitate children and families' sustained access to help in paying for care and more stable child care arrangements, and support providers serving families receiving child care assistance.

We strongly support the goals of this legislation. We will work with you to obtain the funding needed to make these improvements and to allow more children to benefit from these improvements. Between 2006 and 2012, 260,000 fewer eligible children received assistance through the Child Care and Development Block Grant. In addition, most states' payment rates for child care providers are too low to support high-quality care. To reverse the decline in children served and to successfully implement the much-needed improvements included in this legislation, we urge Congress to increase mandatory and discretionary child care funding.

Thank you for all your work on this reauthorization, which is so important for our country's children and families.

Sincerely,

HELEN BLANK,
*Director of Child Care
and Early Learning.*
JOAN ENTMACHER,
*Vice President for
Family Economic Security.*

CHILD CARE AWARE OF AMERICA,
Arlington, VA, September 15, 2014.

Hon. TOM HARKIN,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Washington, DC.

Hon. BARBARA MIKULSKI,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
*Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions, Wash-
ington, DC.*

Hon. RICHARD BURR,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
*Chairman, House Education and the Workforce
Committee, Washington, DC.*

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
*Ranking Member, House Education and the
Workforce Committee, Washington, DC.*

Hon. TODD ROKITA,
*House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. DAVE LOEBSACK,
*House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN HARKIN, RANKING MEMBER ALEXANDER, SENATOR MIKULSKI, AND SENATOR BURR, CHAIRMAN KLINE, RANKING MEMBER MILLER, REPRESENTATIVE ROKITA, AND

REPRESENTATIVE LOEBSACK: I am writing on behalf of Child Care Aware® of America (formerly the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, NACCRRA) to express support for your legislation, the Child Care & Development Block Grant Act of 2014, which would reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant and would better protect the health and improve safety of children in child care settings across America.

Families want their children to be safe in child care. They reasonably assume that a child care license means the state has approved some minimum level of protection for children and that the program will promote their healthy development. Our nationwide polling shows that parents also believe there is oversight by the state. However, most state licensing requirements are weak and oversight is weaker.

For over 15 years, reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant has been Child Care Aware® of America's top legislative priority and we have been working on both the federal and state levels to improve the quality of child care.

Child Care Aware® of America has issued seven licensing studies that show state laws regarding child care settings vary greatly. The most recent report, *We Can Do Better: 2013 Update*, scored and ranked the states on their child care center program requirements and oversight policies. The average score was 92 out of a total possible score of 150—for a grade of 61 percent.

Children's early years are proven to be the most impactful time to create strong learners. This reauthorization bill is a huge step to move the nation forward ensuring children are safe and receiving the best early learning experiences while in child care. This bill sets the standard all families expect for their children by requiring providers to undergo comprehensive background checks, annual and pre-licensure inspections, and training.

This bill includes significant measures to improve the quality of child care and ensure that all children in child care settings are safe.

Child Care Aware® of America looks forward to working with you to pass this legislation into law. Thank you for your continued leadership in support of our nation's children.

Sincerely,

LYNETTE M. FRAGA, PH.D.,
Executive Director.

MICHELLE NOTH
MCCREADY,
Director of Policy.

L. CAROL SCOTT, PH.D.
*President, Board of
Directors.*

NICHOLAS P. VUCIC,
*Senior Government Af-
fairs Associate.*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Finally, I would like to thank all of the Members of the House Education and the Workforce Committee and their staffs for their continued commitment to the well-being of American families.

Mr. Speaker, both Chambers and both parties have come together on a bipartisan basis to improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant. This bill is a strong example of what Congress can achieve by working together. The critical updates in the program will give American families the more support that they need and will better prepare our children for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank my colleagues here on both sides of the aisle. It is not every day on this floor that we get to do that, but I thank them for their remarks and for the debate today.

I want to reiterate my appreciation for the work done on the other side of the Capitol. Again, it is not something we get to talk about every day, but this is an example of a time when we saw a need. Some could argue that we are a little overdue, since it has been 20 years since this has been reauthorized, but as the ranking member, Mr. MILLER, said, this is on the suspension calendar because we recognize that it needs to be done and because we have come together in a bipartisan-bicameral way to address this need.

So I urge my colleagues to support S. 1086, as amended, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I support S. 1086, reauthorizing the Child Care and Development Block Grant program.

We all talk about jobs bills.

Well, in my district, the Northern Mariana Islands, mothers and fathers in 200 families can go to their jobs every day because their children are being cared for through this program.

That's why it is important to reauthorize Child Care, because it helps people who want to work.

Especially in the Northern Marianas, where we are replacing foreign workers with U.S. workers, we need good child care to make that transition.

And the bill accounts for sudden changes of income, so even when the minimum wage increases in the Marianas this month—as I am glad to say it will—families will keep getting child care—and parents will keep working.

Lastly, S. 1086 improves standards, because all parents want to work without worry, knowing their children are well cared for and safe.

I urge passage of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1086, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1700

LAW SCHOOL CLINIC CERTIFICATION PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5108) to establish the Law School Clinic Certification Program of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.