

TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS:

For millions of Americans, returning to work is not just contingent on the lifting of stay-at-home orders and their employer reopening, but on securing care for their children. The existing childcare arrangements for many working parents have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and the resulting economic fallout. To ensure that more Americans can quickly return to work and to support our nation's overall economic recovery, Congress should provide timely, targeted, and temporary emergency assistance to licensed childcare centers and homes. Similarly, states should continue to implement temporary regulatory actions to help licensed centers and homes quickly and safely adjust to meet operational challenges.

To protect public health, many camps and other facilities that care for large groups of children have cancelled their summer programs. Childcare facilities in many states are operating under reduced capacity and social distancing orders. In addition, the childcare industry is comprised of many small and very small businesses – many run by women and women of color – who are on the brink of collapse and may never reopen. While critical support through the CARES Act was provided to small businesses early on in this crisis, according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) only one-quarter of the childcare market received a Paycheck Protection Loan.

For those that have remained open and that will reopen, decreased capacity and new pandemic-related costs mean operating losses. That will eventually lead to more closures and even less available childcare.

As part of the next COVID-19 response package, we urge Congress to provide temporary emergency assistance targeted to licensed childcare providers to help cover increased expenses and forgone revenue directly tied to maintaining public health. Combined with state efforts to help restore lost capacity, your efforts will help ensure that children have a safe place to go as their parents return to work.

Sincerely,