

Senator Bobby Joe Champion
Chair, Health and Human Services
3401 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

April 9, 2025

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Start Early Funders Coalition, we are writing thank the committee for the inclusion of several early childhood provisions in the Jobs and Economic Development omnibus bill. Child care and early learning is often referred to as the workforce behind the workforce. Minnesota's economy relies on access to quality, affordable child care and early learning and parents, businesses and communities cannot thrive without an adequately supported early learning system. We must ensure all children birth to kindergarten from low-income families have access to these programs.

We were pleased to see the inclusion of support for child care providers through business training, shared services and materials for start-up, expansion and operations, as well as grants to local communities to increase child care providers. The inclusion of support to the Minnesota Initiative Foundations is an effective way to effeciently and effectively provide direct support to child care providers who have proven their ability to build the supply of child care, support the retention of child care providers and provide wraparound support to improve our early childhood systems.

Our children, their families and our economy cannot wait for support any longer. Child care and early learning is in crisis across our entire state. High quality programs are closing, and families are finding it increasingly more difficult to be able to afford the high-quality care their children need. Investments to families through these critical programs are essential to prepare our children for educational and life success.

We sincerely hope you will continue to find opportunities over the next several weeks to include investment to support child care and early learning providers in your final omnibus bill. Our vision as a Coalition is that every child in Minnesota is physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively prepared for school and lifelong success. Our coalition is committed to supporting policies that will benefit low-income, rural and BIPOC and their families; and the programs that serve them.

Sincerely,

Allison Corrado,
Start Early Funders Coalition, Public Policy Committee