

July 13, 2020

Representative Brett Guthrie
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Susan Wild
1607 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Guthrie and Wild,

As organizations committed to supporting early childhood education, we write to express our strong support for the Early Educators Apprenticeship Act, which would establish a three-year grant for states to develop, administer, and evaluate a registered apprenticeship program that equips apprentices with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to work in early childhood education (ECE). Overall, the grants would empower states to increase the number of apprentices with a credential or degree and provide a pathway to career advancement for apprentices who complete the program.

Well-qualified early childhood educators are vital to providing quality early learning and care opportunities for children from birth through age five. In the midst of ongoing early learning workforce shortages, however, it can be hard to fill existing vacancies, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Additionally, [nearly 180,000 openings for child care workers](#) are projected each year over the next decade due to retirements or changing occupations. ECE apprenticeships show tremendous potential for addressing this issue by offering on-the-job learning opportunities that help educators acquire the knowledge and skills they need, along a pathway to the credential or degree they desire to advance their career. Recognizing this potential, [states and communities](#) are increasingly turning to apprenticeships to improve the quality of the early childhood workforce and increase their wages. By dedicating federal funding for this promising practice, the Early Educator Apprenticeship Act would support and expand on states' efforts to utilize ECE apprenticeships to address this critical need.

As we strive to expand access to high-quality care for children nationwide, we must confront barriers to ensuring classrooms across the country have well-qualified early childhood educators. ECE apprenticeships do just this, helping to move forward the skills and compensation of the early childhood workforce.

We appreciate your efforts to address this important issue and hope the Committee will likewise see the necessity of this legislation and move it forward. If we can provide any further comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Bank Street College of Education
Bipartisan Policy Center
Child Care Aware of America
Early Care and Education Consortium
First Five Years Fund
KinderCare Education
National Head Start Association
National Association for the Education of Young Children
New America
Save the Children Action Network
ZERO TO THREE

