

Email Template

Please email your state senator and state representative and use the following script to urge them to increase reimbursement rates for the child care subsidy program. You can find your state senator [here](#) and your state representative [here](#).

Dear Senator/Representative [insert the last name of your legislator],

My name is [first and last name], and I serve as the [insert title] for [insert the name of your company and/or child care center]. I am also a constituent in your district. I am writing to urge you to increase investment in reimbursement rates for Michigan's child care subsidy program, which were reduced by over 20 percent near the end of September.

Throughout the pandemic, Michigan used federal COVID relief funding to boost child care subsidy rates, which helped to stabilize child care businesses and to bring subsidy payments closer to the true cost of high-quality care. [Increased reimbursement rates have enabled my center/our centers to...] However, the federal funding has come to an end, and Michigan's FY 2024 budget did not invest sufficient state funding to maintain current subsidy rates.

I urge you to support families and child care businesses by sponsoring a supplemental budget that funds child care reimbursement rates at their highest level. The Senate Fiscal Agency estimates the cost of maintaining rates at this level to be at least \$130 million. Increased subsidy rates have kept child care providers' doors open and enabled them to increase teacher's wages and retain staff. The impending budget reduction will jeopardize providers' ability to hire and retain qualified staff and could cause them to discontinue participation in the subsidy program, to close classrooms, and even to close their doors. Currently, only 41 percent of Michigan child care providers participate in the subsidy program, which makes it difficult for low-income families to find care while they are working or going to school. The subsidy program provides minimal to no cost child care for families who struggle to pay tuition, which in Michigan is nearly \$9,000 annually for home-based infant care, and over \$12,000 annually for center-based infant care.¹

High-quality early care and education not only leads to better health, economic, education and social outcomes for children,² but offers parents greater job stability and strengthens the economy.³ Please support supplemental funding to set child care reimbursement rates at their highest level, which will mean a wise investment for Michigan's current and future prosperity.

Sincerely,

¹ 2023 Child Care and Early Education in Michigan. First Five Years Fund. https://www.ffyf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/FFYF_Michigan_2023.pdf

² Invest in Early Childhood Development: Reduce Deficits, Strengthen the Economy. <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/invest-in-early-childhood-development-reduce-deficits-strengthen-the-economy/>

³ Want to Grow the Economy? Fix the Child Care Crisis. Council For a Strong America. <https://www.strongnation.org/articles/780-want-to-grow-the-economy-fix-the-child-care-crisis>