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Hawaii Attorney General Joins Coalition Urging Increased Childcare Funding

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors today joined a coalition of 22 attorneys general urging the United States Senate to provide robust financial support for childcare providers in the next federal stimulus bill amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In a [letter](#) sent to Senate leadership today, the coalition of attorneys general called on Congress to provide at least \$50 billion in funding to address the immediate needs of childcare systems around the country. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many childcare providers are operating at reduced capacity or have closed, leaving them with little to no revenue to cover payroll, rent, insurance, and other fixed costs. This additional financial support would help childcare providers fulfill these financial obligations so that they are not forced to close for good. It would also help cover essential duty pay for educators and reduce the financial burden on families.

“Strengthening our childcare system provides critically important support to our families,” said Attorney General Connors. “Without access to affordable and safe childcare, the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will increase and continue to reverberate through our community.”

The coalition also expressed support for broader reforms to our childcare system. The attorneys general argue that our childcare system suffers from a broken model, where “parents pay too much and educators make too little,” and that the current pandemic has exacerbated already existing disparities in race, income, and gender in our childcare workforce. The letter insists that “[t]o build a more equitable society beyond this current crisis, we need structural reform that ensures every family has access to quality, affordable childcare and educators earn the pay that they deserve.”

The letter cites a recent survey by the [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#), which found that only 11 percent of providers could survive a closure of indeterminate length without government intervention, and just 16 percent could survive

a closure of more than one month. Recent [estimates](#) predict that, without adequate federal support, nearly 4.5 million childcare slots across the country are at risk of disappearing, including more than 36,596 in Hawaii.

Joining AG Connors in sending today's Massachusetts-led letter are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, Washington State, and Wisconsin.

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