



Legislative Building

Washington State Legislature

Olympia, WA 98504-0600

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Suzan DelBene, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Rick Larsen, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Dan Newhouse, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Rep.

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Derek Kilmer, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Kim Schrier, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Adam Smith, U.S. Rep.
The Honorable Denny Heck, U.S. Rep.

United States Senate
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Colleagues in Washington State's Congressional Delegation:

Thank you for all you are doing in this unprecedented time.

As you consider any additional COVID-19 economic relief packages, we, the undersigned elected leaders of Washington State, write to respectfully request significant investments in and attention to the challenges facing child care.

Here in Washington State and across the country, the child care industry is providing critical services enabling medical professionals, first responders, and other essential workers to provide for communities in our time of greatest need. And yet, the infrastructure of this critical system is crumbling in front of us and threatening our ability to recover from COVID-19 now and in the future.

According to Child Care Aware of Washington, our state has already lost 143 child care centers, 105 family child care homes, and 19 school-age-only child care programs to COVID-19 related closures -- totaling a loss of 12,000 child care slots. The National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) anticipates closure of more than half of child care programs across the country in the next three weeks.

Without financial supports available during the entire period of the crisis and available whether providers are open or not, the NAEYC data clearly show that child care providers will not survive closures—they will not exist when we need them to reopen.

We join with leaders across the country to ask that negotiations on COVID-19 economic relief packages include significant funding to maintain our quality child care supply today and into the future,

and that the funding flow easily, quickly, and immediately. Child care providers are already operating on very small margins, and too often without access the healthcare themselves, while the safety of children, families, educators and the community is paramount in decision- making. Furthermore, extended closures over the next several weeks or months could potentially put a substantial percentage of them out of business permanently, exacerbating the realities of the widespread child care deserts as they already exist today.

We ask that your next COVID-19 relief efforts meet these goals:

- First, make sure that providers, whether they are family home child care or centers, who are staying open during the crisis have the resources and support necessary to do so in safe and healthy environments, including access to necessary funds to maintain their business even if not at full capacity.
- Second, ensure families with children 0-5 or school age attending child care – particularly those of first responders, health care providers, and other essential personnel – are receiving child care subsidies or other assistance payments necessary to ensure they can continue to do needed critical work across our communities and find the high-quality child care needed to do it.
- Third, ensure child care providers who are closed have access to federal funding that will allow them to pay staff and cover fixed costs, including but not limited to business interruption grants. Child care providers vary widely in their current structures and funding streams. No one financial tool will work for all providers, thus it is essential that child care be included in all available recovery programs. We must ensure that when the time comes these small businesses are able to re-open to help with the economic recovery.
- Fourth, ensure that child care providers, including centers and family child care operators, staff, and the families they support are included in all other supports including paid leave, health care coverage, nutrition assistance, enhanced unemployment, grant programs, and other emergency disaster assistance.

To help families in our state, stimulate consumer spending, support small businesses, sustain industries, and buttress the herculean efforts of medical professionals and other frontline workers who are supporting the economy, lawmakers should recognize that the through line in all of this is child care.

Thank you for your leadership on behalf of Washington State. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

The undersigned members of the Washington State Legislature



Tana Senn
State Representative—41st Legislative District



Derek Stanford
State Senator—1st Legislative District



Davina Duerr
State Representative—1st Legislative District



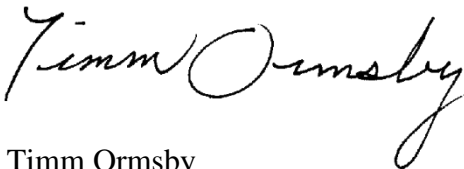
Shelley Kloba
State Representative—1st Legislative District



Andy Billig
State Senator—3rd Legislative District



Marcus Riccelli
State Representative—3rd Legislative District



Timm Ormsby
State Representative—3rd Legislative District



Bill Ramos
State Representative—5th Legislative District



Lisa Callan
State Representative—5th Legislative District



Dave Paul
State Representative—10th Legislative District



Bob Hasegawa
State Senator —11th Legislative District



Steve Bergquist
State Representative—11th Legislative District

Judy Warnick
State Senator—13th Legislative District



Tom Dent
State Representative—13th Legislative District



Chris Correy
State Representative—14th Legislative District



Paul Harris
State Representative—17th Legislative District



Brian Blake
State Representative—19th Legislative District



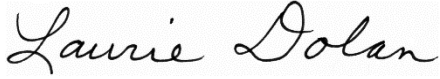
John Braun
State Senator —20th Legislative District



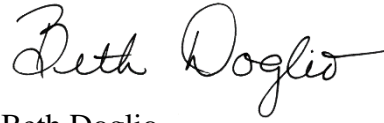
Strom Peterson
State Representative—21st Legislative District



Sam Hunt
State Senator—22nd Legislative District



Laurie Dolan
State Representative—22nd Legislative District



Beth Doglio
State Representative—22nd Legislative District



Christine Rolfes
State Senator—23rd Legislative District



Sherry Appleton
State Representative—23rd Legislative District



Emily Randall
State Senator—26th Legislative District



Laurie Jinkins
State Representative—27th Legislative District



Mari Leavitt
State Representative—28th Legislative District



Christine Kilduff
State Representative—28th Legislative District



Claire Wilson
State Senator—30th Legislative District



Jesse Johnson
State Representative—30th Legislative District



Cindy Ryu
State Representative—32nd Legislative District



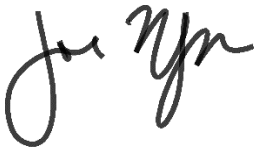
Karen Keiser
State Senator—33rd Legislative District



Tina Orwall
State Representative—33rd Legislative District



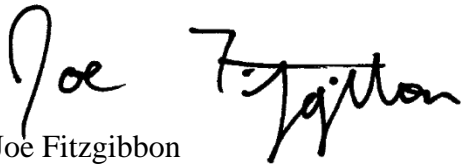
Mia Gregerson
State Representative—33rd Legislative District



Joe Nguyen
State Senator—34th Legislative District



Eileen Cody
State Representative—34th Legislative District



Joe Fitzgibbon
State Representative—34th Legislative District



Drew MacEwen
State Representative—35th Legislative District



Noel Frame
State Representative—36th Legislative District



Rebecca Saldaña
State Senator—37th Legislative District



John McCoy
State Senator—38th Legislative District



June Robinson
State Representative—38th Legislative District



Mike Sells
State Representative—38th Legislative District



Keith Wagoner
State Senator—39th Legislative District



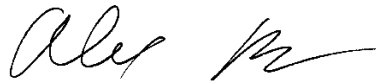
Carolyn Eslick
State Representative—39th Legislative District



Liz Lovelett
State Senator—40th Legislative District



Debra Lekanoff
State Representative—40th Legislative District



Alex Ramel
State Representative—40th Legislative District



Lisa Wellman
State Senator—41st Legislative District



My-Linh Thai
State Representative—41st Legislative District



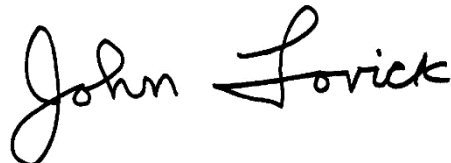
Sharon Shewmake
State Representative—42nd Legislative District



Frank Chopp
State Representative—43rd Legislative District



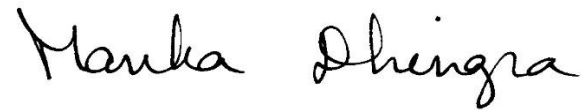
Steve Hobbs
State Senator—44th Legislative District



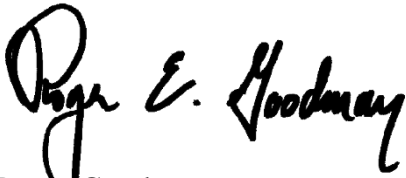
John Lovick
State Representative—44th Legislative District



Jared Mead
State Representative—44th Legislative District



Manka Dhingra
State Senator—45th Legislative District



Roger Goodman
State Representative—45th Legislative District



Gerry Pollet
State Representative—46th Legislative District



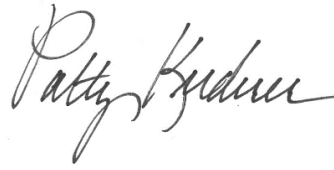
Javier Valdez
State Representative—46th Legislative District



Mona Das
State Senator—47th Legislative District



Debra Entenman
State Representative—47th Legislative District



Patty Kuderer
State Senator—48th Legislative District



Vandana Slatter
State Representative—48th Legislative District



Amy Walen
State Representative—48th Legislative District



Monica Jurado Stonier
State Representative—49th Legislative District