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Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2013 (S.1086) Provides Necessary Changes to Improve Quality of Child Care for Children and Families

High-quality child care is a fundamental need for children and families. Finding affordable child care that meets the developmental needs of children while also supporting parents' ability to work is one of the greatest challenges facing American families today. In 2011, the average cost of center-based care for infants was greater than the annual tuition and fees for an in-state public college in 35 states and the District of Columbia, and the cost for a 4-year-old was greater than the cost of college in 25 states and the District of Columbia. The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary source of federal funding for child care, but CCDBG has not been reauthorized since 1996. Since that time, much has been learned about the importance of a high-quality early development and learning experience for young children. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2013 (S.1086) would reauthorize CCDBG and takes important steps to improve the quality of care for children, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable; establishes minimum health and safety standards in child care; and provides additional supports to assist working parents in finding high-quality care.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2013:

- Establishes new policies that expand access to information about the availability of quality care and promote greater continuity of care to better assist parents in meeting their children's child care needs.
- Creates new standards and enforcement requirements to protect the health and safety of children in subsidized child care.
- Takes important steps, including an expansion of funding set aside for quality improvement, to improve the quality of child care to better meet the developmental needs of children and promote school readiness.
- Outlines policies to meet the needs of low-income children and other vulnerable populations, giving priority to investments in areas with significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment, as well as to infants and toddlers and children with disabilities.

* *The latest year for which data is available*