



READY LOUISIANA



Mobilizing business for a better NW Louisiana - COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED



National Council of Jewish Women Greater New Orleans Section



# United Statement Of Support For Early Child Education

*The future of Louisiana depends on how willing we are to care for and prepare our youngest citizens. High quality early care and education will prepare our students for a smart start in life, enable families to be productive in the workforce, and serve as an economic engine for local communities. That is why we support expanding access to high quality early learning across the state of Louisiana by restoring funding for early care and education.*

**We believe that young children in Louisiana should have access to high quality early care and education that ensures they are off to a smart start in life.** Ninety percent of brain development takes place between birth and age four, wiring a child’s brain for future success or failure in school, work, and life. Yet in Louisiana, we know that more than 40% of Kindergartners start school behind their peers – and those who start behind are more likely to stay behind. However, quality early care and education can close this gap by developing cognitive and character skills when it matters most. For this reason, we are committed to greater investment in early care and education.

We know that the Child Care Assistance Program in Louisiana has been substantially cut, and that child care instability has a significant effect on Louisiana’s workforce participation and productivity, and our state’s economy. Child care breakdowns for working parents cost Louisiana employers dearly. A recent study showed the aggregate impact to the state economy at over \$1.1 billion annually.

Meanwhile, funding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Louisiana’s only state administered early education program for children under age four that provides assistance for low income working parents and for parents who are in school or job training, has been cut substantially since 2008. Today the program serves 17,000 children a month—down from almost 40,000 children in 2009. There is now a waiting list for the program of over 4,500 children. We are committed to expanding access to high quality care for children of working parents.

**We support investment in early care and education centers, small businesses that serve local communities.** For every dollar invested in early care and education centers, \$1.78 is generated by the centers for the local economy in terms of purchased services and goods. An investment in early care and education is an investment in Louisiana’s economy. We are committed to ensuring that Louisiana’s dollars are spent locally.

**We support the use of public funds that result in high returns on investment.** The research is clear that investment in early care and education is one of the smartest investments our state can make. High quality early care and education has been shown to result in up to a 13% return on investment based on increased school and career achievement, as well as reduced costs in remedial education and health and criminal justice system expenditures. We are committed to effective investments of our public dollars.

**We know that Louisianans overwhelmingly support expanding access for early care and learning programs.** A poll of Louisiana voters - Democrat, Republican and Independent – showed that 64% of those polled support expanding early education programs for infants and toddlers, as well as preschoolers, in order to prepare students for success and improve overall graduation rates. Voters recognized that investing in early care and education is a sound fiscal strategy that allows parents to work or pursue further education and support their families.



**We understand that expanding access to high quality early learning programs will improve child outcomes, strengthen our families and workforce, and build our economy.** For these reasons, we have committed to working together to advocate for additional funding for early care and education programs – to ensure that every child has access to high quality early education programs that meet their needs, prepare our students for success in school, and allow families to continue their training and work.

*The following organizations join in support of this statement:*

**Business Groups**

- Baton Rouge Area Chamber
- Committee of 100
- Converge
- Greater New Orleans, Inc.
- Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana
- Jefferson Business Council
- Jefferson Chamber
- Kenner Business Association
- Louisiana Association of Business and Industry
- Louisiana Children’s Museum
- Louisiana Early Childhood Business Roundtable
- Monroe Chamber of Commerce
- Natchitoches Community Alliance
- New Orleans Chamber
- One Acadiana
- Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance

**United Ways**

- Louisiana Association of United Ways
- Capital Area United Way
- United Way of Acadiana
- United Way of Central Louisiana
- United Way of Northeast Louisiana
- United Way of Northwest Louisiana
- United Way of Southeast Louisiana
- United Way of Southwest Louisiana
- United Way of St. John
- Women United

**Religious Groups**

- Bread or Stones Campaign, Louisiana
- Interchurch Conference
- National Council of Jewish Women, Greater New Orleans Section

**Advocacy Groups and Community Organizations**

- Agenda for Children
- Beary Cherry Tree
- Childcare Association of Louisiana
- Citizens for One Greater New Orleans
- Education’s Next Horizon
- Health Education Alliance of Louisiana
- Institute of Mental Hygiene
- Kingsley House
- Louisiana Budget Project
- Louisiana Partnership for Children & Families
- Louisiana Policy Institute for Children
- New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
- Orleans Public Education Network
- Ready Louisiana
- Step Forward
- Stand for Children Louisiana
- The Early Childhood Development Center of Avoyelles
- The Learning Castle
- Urban League of Louisiana
- Wilcox Academy of Early Learning



Louisiana Association of United Ways



United Way of Acadiana



St. John United Way



United Way of Central Louisiana



United Way of Northeast Louisiana



United Way of Southeast Louisiana



Capital Area United Way



United Way of Northwest Louisiana



United Way of Southwest Louisiana



UNITED WAY OF SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA  
WOMEN UNITED

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