



UNITED STATES SENATOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 14, 2024

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to extend my greetings to all who are gathered for the Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children's 2024 Annual Conference.

As early childhood educators, you work each day to equip your students with the skills and confidence they need to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond. I believe that access to this care is a moral and economic imperative for America. Children deserve high-quality care, and families deserve choice, freedom, and flexibility when seeking child care. With COVID relief dollars running out, it is abundantly clear that child care in Virginia is in a crisis. Providers are stretched thin and too many middle-class families are struggling to find affordable, accessible care, majorly straining budgets for parents across the Commonwealth.

I am a strong supporter of child care investments at both the state and federal level. Over the last few months, I have joined my colleagues in sending letters to President Biden and the Senate Appropriations Committee requesting a \$16 billion investment for the child care industry. Similarly, I have continued to join my colleagues in the Senate in sending letters to appropriation leaders requesting funding for early child care and education, specifically for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Head Start, Early Head Start, Preschool Development Grants, and early intervention services available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C (Grants for Infants and Families) and Part B Section 619 (Preschool Grants). I am also pushing for an expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC). Together, these programs provide children with the early learning experiences that they need to succeed while supporting parents in their efforts to provide for their families.

I hope that you will find the conference beneficial as you gain new ideas to take back to your classrooms and make new connections with speakers and colleagues. Please accept my appreciation for your tremendous service and best wishes for a successful event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark R. Warner".

MARK R. WARNER  
United States Senator