Family is part of our bottom line. The lack of a good, affordable child care system is crushing families, workers, and small businesses. This doesn’t just hurt small businesses owners and our employees – it also contributes to inequality when it comes to race, gender, and wealth. Political leaders who care about small businesses, our employees, and our communities will support public solutions and a sustainable public revenue stream for affordable, quality child care for all.

THE FACTS

1/3 families report spending 20 percent or more of their annual household income on child care

65 percent of young children have all available parents in the workforce

parents of children age < 5 have quit, declined, or changed jobs because of child care challenges

The first five years of a child’s life set them up to be good students and civic stewards later in life

In many states, child care exceeds the costs of housing or college tuition

More than one-half of families in America live in child care deserts

THE SMALL BUSINESS CASE FOR CHILD CARE INVESTMENT

Good for employees, good for business: Access to stable, quality, affordable child care improves employee morale, reduces absenteeism, and increases business productivity. It creates a more stable workforce, reducing recruiting, training and turnover costs.

Leveling the playing field between small and large businesses: Small businesses operate on thin margins, making it nearly impossible to provide child care benefits to employees. In a tight labor market, that means losing potential employees to large corporations who wield the market power to provide child care benefits. When all employers abide by the same rules, the playing field is more level.

Racial and gender equity: High child care costs hit women and people of color the hardest, and expanding public investment in child care creates greater gender and racial equity.

Removing barriers to starting or expanding small businesses: Every tear in the social safety net prevents people from pursuing their dream of small business ownership, stifling innovation.

Investing in child care infrastructure: Increasing child care availability and quality creates regions conducive to business growth, making them more attractive to young families.

Valuing child care providers is valuing small business: Higher compensation and paid training opportunities for child care teachers and caregivers will help attract and retain a talented, dedicated workforce, leading to higher-quality child care while supporting the development of child care small businesses.

GET IN TOUCH

For questions, please contact info@mainstreetalliance.org. You can also find Main Street Alliance on the web at mainstreetalliance.org.
The Build Back Better (BBB) Act, already passed by the House, would save families thousands of dollars in child care and preschool costs and build a strong, stable early learning system that meets the needs of families, providers, and the economy. BBB includes nearly $390 billion to address the child care needs of families with children ages 0-5 and guarantee access to free high-quality preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. It limits child care costs for families to no more than 7% of income, for families earning up to 250% of state median income and establishes a long term program, with funding for six years, enabling 20 million children to access affordable high-quality child care. The proposal also supports providers with increased wages to shore up and strengthen the child care workforce and guarantees access to free preschool for more than 6 million children per year and increases the quality of preschool for many more children already enrolled.

Recent national polling shows a strong majority of voters are supportive of the child care and preschool investments proposed in the Build Back Better Act. Key findings include: 81% of voters see child care and preschool as a good investment of taxpayer money—including 80% of independents and 66% of Republicans.

Source: First Five Years Fund, Voters Overwhelmingly Support Federal Investments in Child Care and Pre-K, September 2021