



April 21, 2022

Dear Members of the Whatcom County Council:

We are writing to express our support of the proposal from the Opportunity Council to stabilize the child care industry and increase family access to high quality child care in Whatcom County. The focus on these two issues matches our priorities, as outlined in our recommendations presented to Council in October, 2021. We are glad for the direct support to child care providers and applaud the Opportunity Council for developing braided funding partnerships to maximize the support to providers and child care workers in our community. The Opportunity Council, through their Center for Retention and Expansion of Child Care, has the relationships, background knowledge and experience needed for successful implementation.

We are hopeful that this is just a start of an enduring investment in child care by our community. In order to make sure that our public dollars are effectively invested in accordance with our stated priorities, we look forward to evaluating the progress through declared measurements on success and the breakdown towards employee support as they find them out. By monitoring these investments, we will be more suitably direct future investments into child care.

And finally, we would like to take this opportunity to again advocate for a clear pathway to access the remaining ARPA funds. As expressed in the March 29, 2022 letter from the Child Care Coalition and the Child and Family Well-being Task Force, our community will benefit from a more equitable and transparent process in accessing ARPA funds that involves a publicly available application with a clear and transparent prioritization process along with support for applicants that are typically excluded from funding opportunities.

Thank you for your continued support of our child care providers and workforce. Our families and businesses depend on them for their well-being.

Sincerely,

The Child and Family Well-being Task Force