



Dear Early Care and Education Stakeholders,

Thank you for supporting regional early care and education advocacy efforts. Idahoans across the state called, wrote letters, and met personally with legislators urging them to vote “yes” for Idaho’s youngest citizens. Unfortunately, at the last minute, the House declined to hear the bill that would have allocated \$18 million for our children--\$300,000 of which would have been invested in North Idaho.

In North Idaho, the PDG would have supported training and professional development for child care teachers, increased family access to child care, and provided information and resources to parents for at-home learning as well as finding quality care when they need to work or go to school.

The last few months have taught us some important lessons:

1. Advocates are everywhere. Over 150 citizens signed the support letter in just one week, and represented a diverse cross-section of our community
2. We must make our voices stronger and get ahead of education and advocacy so we aren’t scrambling to play catch up when misinformation reaches decision-makers’ ears. We can’t afford to let opportunities to invest in our children pass us by.
3. Our work to ensure every child in every community has a strong, nurturing foundation continues. We continue to provide child care scholarships to families, so that adults can work and children have consistent, safe, quality care.
We continue to provide grants to child care providers for quality improvement, health and safety needs, background checks, and educational materials.
We are also working with businesses looking for ways to support their employees’ child care needs, which leads to a stronger workforce and attracts new talent. Businesses across the nation are stepping up and taking action to solve the caregiving crisis.

On behalf of the United Way of North Idaho Early Care and Education Task Force, thank you for your support and attention to the critical window of development that happens from birth to age 5, and for joining together to ensure Idaho children have the best chance for a successful and healthy future.

In gratitude,

The United Way of North Idaho Early Care and Education Task Force