



Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer Zoom Call

June 7, 2022

Facilitators Elliot Regenstein (Foresight Law + Policy) and Mandy Ableidinger (Alliance)

NEW CALL TIME: 3pm ET on the first Tuesday of each month. Please delete any current calendar invitations and look for an email today to register for the new time (with a new link).

Please note that the July call has been shifted to accommodate the Fourth of July holiday, so we will convene on July 12th (the second Tuesday) rather than July 5th.

When you register, you will receive a reminder and Zoom link in advance of the call and the option to add the calls to your calendar.

Welcome Notes


- StateFedConnect: What's New?
 - Advisory Council - five new members on one year leadership cycles, let us know if you are interested in a leadership role in future years.
 - New facilitators – [Foresight Law + Policy](#) team: Elliot Regenstein and Reg Leichty with support from Jamie Brandon. Elliot and Reg have a lot of experience with federal early childhood policy and the workings of Congress, supporting states, and facilitating groups like StateFedConnect.
- Refresh (not reimagining!) of StateFedConnect with a new approach:
 - Goals of SFC remain the same: two-way communication to help you get actionable federal policy information in an efficient way and ensure that your expertise with how federal policy is implemented in the states and what is needed on the ground gets communicated back to national partners, the administration, and Congress.
 - Inaugural Advisory Council of 5 state allies who will help us keep SFC relevant and actionable for you.
 - [Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Rhode Island Kids Count](#)
 - [Ben Geis, The Prichard Committee in Kentucky](#)
 - [Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Children's Advocacy Alliance of Nevada](#)
 - [Jim McKay, Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia](#)
 - [Mindy Binderman, GEEARS in Georgia](#)
 - Share feedback on how we are doing anytime via email or phone - Mandy, Daniela, Elliot or Reg, or any of the Advisory Council members.

Early Learning Updates in Congress

Sarah Rubinfield (Director of Government Affairs, First Five Years Fund (FFYF))

Murray/Kaine Child Care Proposal

- Proposal has been received well broadly, however no legislative text yet. Proposal includes:
 - Triple CCDBG funding for 6 years (\$12 billion increase each year, total of \$72 billion)
 - \$18 billion of that dedicated to supply and compensation
 - \$12 billion for wages
 - Child care and development expansion program. Similar to House entitlement in Build Back Better. It will complement CCDBG; offer child care support to families.
- State Reports: Has anyone sent state-level letters in support of this or have plans to do so?
 - ACNJ sent a [sign-on letter](#) to NJ delegation.
 - WV has connected with Manchin's staff on the provisions. They were able to secure a letter from the WV DHHR Cabinet Secretary urging Manchin to vote for child care in the reconciliation bill -- and specifically the benefits of Murray/Kaine for WV. Also pre-addressed post cards to Manchin's office, distributed to 300 child cares across the state (see below).



I need child care...

☐ so I can work.

☐ so I know my child is safe.

☐ for my child's healthy development.

☐ other: _____

Name _____

City _____

#childcare4wv

Senator Joe Manchin
900 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 629
Charleston, WV 25302

- MA did a sign on letter with over 200 organizations
 - CT will do one to Murphy and Blumenthal
 - MT is redrafting state specific action letter for Montana's Congressional Delegation
 - ME is working on a letter
 - WI would be happy to do a letter if helpful
 - Start Early and our partners here in Illinois have been sharing out the FFYF alerts. Will check into repurposing previously drafted letters. Met with Senator Durbin's staff.
 - Will take this to our leadership team at Groundwork Ohio about whether we are able to do one in Ohio to Senators Brown and Portman
 - NV will send a thank you note to Senator Cortez Masto
- Per the discussion, a template letter can be found attached to this email should it be helpful.
 - The Alliance shared details about the Thursday, June 9th press conference with Sen Murray, Sen. Kaine and Sen. Smith and a few House members - to show support for inclusion of child care in reconciliation. Day of Action today coincides with that.
 - FFYF email action: <https://ffyf.quorum.us/campaign/36144/>
 - FFYF Action Center: https://ffyf.quorum.us/action_center/
 - Email language: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a5Cs7S6VjDTgX-IP2d0l7uwEbGYOvmwofvSLmAWmtl0/edit?usp=sharing>
- *Only available for those with Dem Senators

Reconciliation

- Recent reports of Schumer/Manchin discussions, but no concrete info right now. Growing sense of urgency around ACA subsidies.

- Timing: Senate is working on gun reform, so possibly after that they will turn back to reconciliation. Democrats are mindful of the limited time left in the legislative calendar. Possible that something could come together prior to July 4th recess.
- Senators Casey, Smith, & Hirono wrote a letter calling for funding on early learning and care. A record 44 senators signed it (most of the caucus, as those the letter is addressed to won't sign). The letter included language calling for child care to be included in reconciliation – advocates can use this to remind members of their signature on this letter and the importance of the funding. [Here is a link to the round-up of all letters](#), including this one.

What Advocates Can Do Now: Advocates can ask their Dem senators to contact Sens. Schumer, Manchin and other leadership to encourage them to include child care – like the Murray/Kaine proposal – in the reconciliation package.”

Formula Shortage (Elliot Regenstein, Foresight Law + Policy)

- This seems to be a fast-moving problem that current Congress is not well positioned to solve. There are a number of creative solutions at the state level. Are there ideas and steps that have been taken at the state level that attendees want to share with the group?
 - MN - Has been working on coverage of donor pasteurized milk. We have donor banks that have milk, but parents can't afford it. Trying to make it more affordable and in the long term make it reimbursable. FL just [passed](#) the law that would allow them to cover it locally. I think it was part of the federal package at one point in time - but it would be a huge benefit for many families.
 - IL passed a similar policy. IL WIC was getting formula elsewhere so hasn't hit those families as hard.
 - [Resource](#) - <https://freeformula.exchange/> National mutual aid platform to connect people who need baby formula in the shortage to people who have surplus formula to donate.
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Child Nutrition Waivers

- Expire on June 30 - which may have an impact on support. Congress is unlikely to do anything prior to the deadline.
- No one had insights, but we will keep an eye on this topic should any action occur.

What Advocates Can Do Now: Albert Wat noted that Save the Children Action Network has put out some alerts about the USDA waiver expiration. If you're in a state where SCAN is active, it may have more info about what advocates can do.

FY 2023 Budget Process (Steve Voytek, Foresight Law + Policy)

- Overview of what to expect - in early March Congress passed FY22 budget, but the lateness created a slowdown in the FY23 budget planning process. President Biden published his FY23 budget request in late March. Due to this, there were “artificial cuts” which ended up being lower than what the president signed for FY22. Cabinet Secretaries have been testifying on their department's administrative requests with Congressional committees.
 - Next steps should include setting top line program numbers (non-defense budget is our focus). Once top lines are set, committees can work to specify budget line items.

- House is anticipated to go first, but we anticipate the Labor HHS bill will go last; this is atypical, as usually when Democrats are in charge Labor H goes first -- but given the current atmosphere, this will likely be a controversial bill to take up. Timing: Likely to start before July 4 recess and continue after that as well.
- Senate has not made any FY23 moves as of yet. Given Sept 30 funding deadline, it is likely that Congress will not complete the FY23 budget before government funding runs out on Sept. 30, which means Congress would need to pass a continuing resolution in order to continue funding the federal government at the current FY22 funding levels until the FY23 budget can be negotiated. Timing: Likely to see more formal details during the lame duck session (Nov/Dec) prior to the new Congress taking office in January 2023.

Questions and discussion

- What might next year's budget look like? *Typically, it takes around 18 months to create a budget, so in all likelihood FY24 is already on members' radar for planning purposes. The budget justifications created when requesting a budget will provide deep insights on how they are justifying the requests to Congress.*
 - MA - Our state has a bill in committee with language that says federal funding is needed to accomplish what is needed, (beyond CCDBG – additional COVID relief money needed, etc) – is this a trend in other states?
 - MI – We have a surplus and are struggling to make the case for more funding when we can't get people to enroll in the programs for infants/toddler. Increasing eligibility and rates and we aren't seeing an uptick in caseloads which makes it hard to ask for state resources.
 - Similar in MN
 - NJ - We are about where we were pre-pandemic. Empty classrooms due to teacher shortage.
 - CT - Waiving parent fees contributed to increased case load in CT. We have seen more subsidies used in unlicensed relative care.
 - IL – similar to MI. We've dropped copays, expanded eligibility for job seekers, increased rates, increased the eligibility income threshold, but still have flat caseloads. The state is about to launch a big enrollment campaign. But I don't know if it'll work. (The reasons for the depressed caseload are many.)
- *Is it a supply problem or a demand problem – is it that parents don't want child care?*
 - Demand problem in MI, supply problem elsewhere. Albert Wat will see if there are any trends in the data.
 - Alabama's unemployment rate is under 3% and programs are challenged to find and keep staff. We're paying bonuses to child care employees of \$1,500 each quarter.
 - NC is in a similar place with trying to make the case for more investment when there has been a history of not being able to use prior investments because of supply issues.
 - Elliot identified this as a potential issue for further discussion at a future meeting.

Key Dates/Events/Actions and What Advocates Can Do:

TAKE ACTION ON RECONCILIATION

- [First Five Years Fund has revamped their action center](#) – directed at Senate Dems – to help use the reenergized support for the new Murray/Kaine proposal to ramp up advocacy over the coming weeks
- [Tell Your Senators to Support NEW Childcare Legislation](#) (Community Change)
- [Email Template](#) (Child Care Aware of America)
- [We are in DANGER of losing child care in Congress's economic package!](#) (MomsRising)
- [Send a message to Congress about why they should Think Babies and Act](#) (ZERO TO THREE)
- [Support the Child Care and Early Education Reconciliation Plan](#) (Prevent Child Abuse America)
- Tell Senate Democrats to #SolveChildCare (FFYF) [Call](#), [Email](#) and [Tweet](#)
- [Act Now! Tell Congress To Boost The Pay of Child Care and Head Start Staff](#) (Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP)

RESOURCES ON THE MURRAY / KAINE PROPOSAL

- [HELP Committee Press Release](#)
 - [One Pager](#) from the Senate HELP Committee
- HuffPost Article: [Democrats Are Trying To Salvage Their Party's Child Care Initiative](#)
- [State-by-State Analysis from CLASP](#)
- [Analysis from CBPP](#)
- [Child Care Aware of America Blog](#)
- [New America Blog](#)

EARLY EDUCATION RESOURCES

- [The Child Care Paradox: How Child Care Providers Balance Paid and Unpaid Caregiving](#) (Center for the Study of Social Policy)
- [At the Crossroads: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2021](#) (National Women's Law Center)

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY RESOURCES

- [“We Don’t Have that in Mississippi”: How Temporary Expansions of the Child Tax Credit & Child Care Demonstrate the Importance of Federal Investments & Oversight](#) (Center for the Study of Social Policy)
- Updated: [Early Childhood Two-Generation State Policy Profiles](#) (National Center for Children in Poverty)

CHILD NUTRITION RESOURCES

- [Urgent Congressional Action is Needed to Stave Off Hunger for Millions of Students](#) (Center for American Progress)
 - More here from @CAPPoverty: <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/urgent-congressional-action-is-needed-to-stave-off-hunger-for-millions-of-students/>

IMMIGRATION EVENT:

- [EVENT: June 23 \(11am-2pm ET\)](#) - The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), along with our partners at the Children's Network, Children Thrive Action Network, and the Texas Family Leadership Council are hosting the third annual Immigration Summit on Centering the Needs of Children & Families. The summit will explore the unique challenges facing immigrant children and their families. Join us to learn about child-forward immigration policies, access to basic needs and mental health resources, education, and how to shift the narrative surrounding immigrants and immigration. Our summit will bring together child advocates and experts from across the nation! To register please click [here](#).