

EDWARD J. MARKEY
7TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

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CHAIRMAN
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
1989 OCT 23 AM 10:22
CAMBRIDGE MA.

October 20, 1989

Mr. John E. Flynn
Deputy City Clerk
Office of the Cambridge City Clerk
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Flynn:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding the child care proposal in the House Reconciliation bill, H.R. 3299.

As you may know, I was a cosponsor and strong supporter of H.R. 3, introduced by Representative Gus Hawkins (D-CA) on January 3, 1989. This bill's language was very similar to the child care package that was reported out of the Education and Labor Committee. I believe it is imperative that we establish a comprehensive national child care policy. The United States lags far behind other industrialized nations in this respect. Due to the rise in single-parent families and families in which both parents work, there is an increasing need for affordable, quality child care.

You will be pleased to know that I voted against both the Edwards and the Stenholm amendments which were attempts to weaken the child care proposal in the Budget Reconciliation bill. On October 5, 1989, both amendments were defeated by votes of 285 to 140 and 230 to 195, respectively. As a similar child care bill, S. 5 passed in the Senate in June, the two bills now go to conference committee, where differences between the two bills will be resolved. Once the bill is reported out of conference committee and passes both Houses, it will become law unless vetoed by President Bush.

I feel strongly that this child care proposal is a major step forward for working families in search of affordable, quality child care. This bill helps in a number of ways to expand and improve child care options and also to assist poor families in paying for these options. I have enclosed a copy of my statement in support of the Budget Reconciliation child care proposal.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to get in touch. If

Mr. Flynn
October 20, 1989
Page 2

I can be of any further assistance to you, please do not
hesitate to contact me.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ed Markey".

Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress

EJM/jec
Enclosure

Congressional Record

A STEP TOWARD RESOLVING THE NATIONAL CHILD CARE CRISIS

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 5, 1989

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, this Nation is facing a child care crisis that touches every American family with young children. Twenty-three percent of the Nation's families have children age 6 or younger. Right now, the average family uses more than three different types of child care every week, indicating the instability of today's typical child care program. Beginning in 1990, two-thirds of women with preschool children will be working. Approximately 25 percent of today's working mothers are the sole economic support for their children. The composition of the Nation's work force has changed—last year, 51.6 million women made up 45 percent of the total labor force.

The typical family of mom staying home with the kids while dad goes off to work each day has changed. Many of today's families are predominantly single-parent households in which the sole parent works or double-parent households in which both parents work. It is a tragedy that the children of this country are made to suffer due to a lack of national quality child care programs.

I rise in support of the child care proposal in the House reconciliation bill. This proposal builds on expanding efforts already underway at both the Federal and State level to assist poor and low-income families in paying for child care: 25 percent of the funds are reserved to assist existing Head Start programs—expanding the program to full-day, year-round services for children. Twenty-five percent of the funds are reserved for school based early childhood programs, as well as for before- and after-school child care. Thirty-five percent of the funds are reserved to strengthen current State programs for infants and young children by allowing parents the choice of neighborhood, community-based, or other child care centers.

There is also a tremendous need to improve the quality of the child care available. Providing quality child care is a major concern for many parents. The United States is one of few industrialized nations that lack child care standards that regulate child care programs throughout the country. Without any Federal standards, many parents, especially low-income parents are forced to leave their children in substandard, even dangerous situations each day. It is important that we, as legislators recognize and address this need for quality child care choices for children. This child care proposal addresses this need of improving the quality of child care available. Under title IV, 15 percent of the funds are designated to improve the system of enforcing standards that regulate the centers. Part of this initiative includes strengthening the ability of parents to monitor child care centers, encouraging more participation and feedback from parents. Title IV also helps States to im-

plement referral systems, to improve child care workers' salaries and to fund training for providers. This provision also helps increase the pool of available child care options by helping states to start new community and neighborhood centers.

Studies indicate that quality child care programs ultimately pay for themselves. The need for business interaction is crucial, because it benefits both the employer and employee. Decent, safe day care ensure that our Nation's children grow to be stable, productive, and competitive individuals and early preschool day care makes an even greater positive impact on the child. The child care proposal in H.R. 3299 helps to expand the business community's important role in providing child care. Employees are more competitive and focused when their children are being cared for in safe, comfortable, child care facilities. Businesses benefit by attracting and keeping employees who will not spend work hours worrying about the quality and availability of day care. Nationwide, employers report that providing child care services employees results in lower absenteeism and turnover and higher productivity and morale. This provision creates a matching grant program to assist businesses in starting or improving child care facilities.

The child care proposal in the House of reconciliation bill best addresses the child care needs of the families of this country. It helps poor working parents by assisting them in the initial cost, and it helps low-income working parents through a tax credit. It also addresses the concerns of all parents in search of decent child care. This child care proposal is a necessity for the working parents of this country. It is a solid approach to a basic, growing need that is growing larger each day. Mothers with preschool-age children continue to enter with work force in great numbers. It provides the assurance that parents will finally have the quality, affordable child care they desperately need.

Inadequate child care is a precursor to illiteracy, teen student drop-out and drugs in our schools. Just last week, President Bush and the Nation's Governors set goals for our education system that recognized a fundamental truth: If a child does not arrive at school ready to learn, no amount of teaching is likely to overcome this deficiency. By ensuring that parents of all income levels have quality choices for their children from infancy to the teen years, we are ultimately beginning to address a host of later problems. The child care provisions in this bill build on existing child care programs, assuring parents a range of choices in child care, and offering direct assistance to help parents pay for care. I strongly support this comprehensive national child care proposal.

3. S-731

Communication received from Congressman Edward J. Markey in acknowledgement of a communication received by his office from the City Council regarding the child care proposal in the House Reconciliation bill, H.R. 3299.

In City Council,

October 30, 1989

Placed on file