



Notes: StateFedConnect Peer-to-Peer Zoom Call

February 7, 2023

Facilitator Elliot Regenstein (Foresight Law + Policy)

Please note that our next call is scheduled for March 7, 2023 at 3:00 PM ET

What Advocates Can Do Summary

On Appropriations

- Advocates may choose to engage with lawmakers (particularly freshman congressional leaders) on the importance of early learning and CCDBG to lay make the connection prior to the beginning of the budget season.

On Child Nutrition

- If advocates choose to reach out to congressional members and invite them or their staff on site for a visit, think about taking them into a program during meal times, in order to share how increased grocery costs have impacted their program.

Welcome

- **Why we're here** - To connect state advocates with each other and engage with partners at the federal level. We are also focused on creating community among state advocates on federal issues.
- **What's on today's agenda** – Following the new model used the past few months, the StateFedConnect calls now includes feature an “Outside In” conversation (this month is the Federal Funding Cliff), a federal overview, a deeper dive into a “hot topic” (this month is Appropriations), and a “what’s next” discussion (Child Nutrition). We will then close with a high note -- something positive that happened in federal advocacy that felt like a win. Moving forward, we hope advocates volunteer to share those high notes, whether it’s a new strategy that you feel good about or a step forward on a policy win. Please email your high notes to mableidinger@earlysuccess.org and/or Elliot.Regenstein@flpadvisors.com, and we’ll reach out!
- **Office Hours** – A calendar invitation has been sent for **February 21st at 4pm ET**. This will be a short 30 minute drop in conversation about federal policy, state implementations, etc. Bring your questions as there is no set agenda.
- **Survey** – Thank you to those who have completed the short survey! If you have not, you have another week to complete the survey ([here](#)) and help us gain insights on how we can be most helpful to you!
- **Quick Polls** – We held a quick poll on whether to hold a summer meeting in DC and gain insights on your current relationships with staffers. Thanks for your input! We will have additional quick poll questions in coming months about a variety of topics to gather your insights.

“Outside In” conversation: The Federal Funding Cliff

Discussion Questions:

- Given the potential impact of the cliff, what actions has your state taken to prepare for it?
- How likely is it that your state will take meaningful action to address the cliff? Why is that?

Kentucky advocates shared that the data from a survey regarding the fragility of the child care system and the impact when federal funds are gone led to many conversations with state government about how to protect providers and families. The state has verbally committed to sending out communication regarding a one-time additional stabilization payment of state funds (\$50 million). This additional payment will get the child care sector to January 2024 when the next budget session begins. There are plans to advocate for stable funding for the 2024 session. The Alliance and CLASP were extremely helpful in pinpointing how federal stabilization funds can be used to support child care.

- Several states shared that their governors are interested in tax cuts which will limit resources available for child care and other EC priorities.
- Many states already have surpluses. There continues to be bipartisan support for child care in many states, but advocates in many states don't see a clear path towards increasing state funding to counter the federal funding cliff.
- Advocates are looking for good messaging around the federal funds serving the purpose they were intended for and needing state dollars to continue the gains made.
- For many states, federal funding has meant a pull-back in state funding for child care.

Resources:

- [The Outlook for State Budgets Heading Into 2023](#)
- Child Care Aware of America (CCAoA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) co-authored a guest blog for the Education Commission of the States “[As Federal Relief Funding for Early Care and Education Fades, States Step In](#)”.

Federal Overview

(Reg Leichty, Foresight Law + Policy)

- **Update:** In the SOTU, the President issued a call for increasing access to affordable child care and for ensuring that preschool is available for three- and four-year olds across the country.
- On March 9, the Administration will [release](#) the FY24 budget (several weeks later than is customary).

House

- Under the House rules package passed, every House committee is tasked with publishing an oversight agenda for the 118th Congress. The House Education & the Workforce Committee has [published](#) an oversight agenda that includes a wide range of topics with everything from student loan relief to oversight of emergency COVID-19 relief funds, as well as a focus on emphasizing that Health and Human Services should direct states to be cognizant of parent rights in the context of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. The oversight agenda of the committee provides a good view of the hearing topics we will see over the next two years. The

first hearing of the committee is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, with one witness focused on parent rights, one focused on workforce issues, and Governor Polis of Colorado serving as the Democrats' sole witness.

- The House adjourns Thursday for two-week work period in their home districts, returning February 27.

Senate

- The Senate HELP Committee's first organizational meeting is scheduled for Thursday with Senators Sanders and Cassidy leading the committee for the first time. The Thursday session should provide some insights into the long-range policy topics for the committee during this Congress. Senator Sanders is holding an evening town hall session on February 13 regarding teacher pay. The town hall is a public event at the Capitol Visitors Center (but will likely not be livestreamed).
- The Senate is in session next week and then adjourns until February 27.

Resources:

- [House Education and the Workforce Committee oversight plan](#)
- [118th Congress Senate HELP Committee members](#)
- [Administration plans budget release for March 9](#)

Hot Topic: Appropriations

(Amanda Guarino, FFYF)

Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) held a [press conference](#) alongside other Democrats on February 7 in support of child care to show ongoing support from Democrats for these issues. It also provided an opportunity for Senator Sanders to demonstrate his support for child care as he takes over the leadership of the HELP committee from Senator Murray.

It was a great win to have the 30% increase in the end of year omnibus and that was attributed to two specific things: 1) continued messaging on the hill and at the state level and 2) bipartisan support. This year will be a much tougher environment, and at a minimum we will need to protect the gains made. It is important to continue to engage with and educate members and staff to ensure we have connections with House Republicans. Allies can let them know why funding is critical and what the ongoing funds and needs are, specifically calling out funding cliff issues and how constituencies and communities will be affected by the changes. We can also reach out to freshman members of Congress to help make early children one of the topics to believe in and bring home to confidently talk about in their states. We want them to put CCDBG requests in or in their letters of support so that it can be included in the budget cap deals and we can maintain budget support. FFYF is working to ensure we have a Republican-led appropriations letter for this year in addition to a Democratic letter. Thus far, we have gotten great support and hope to get even more moving forward. Advocates can engage with lawmakers on the importance of early learning, specifically focused on CCDBG and Head Start, would be helpful in laying the foundation for the budget season.

Upcoming bills that we expect to be introduced:

- A new version of the Child Care for Working Families Act
- Senator Warren's Child Care bill
- American Apprenticeship Act was reintroduced ([HR511](#) and [S83](#))

- There are several other bills that were introduced pre-COVID to improve the child care system and make incremental gains that may be reintroduced during this Congress

Discussion:

Advocates on the call identified where they have new members in Congress and any outreach they have done thus far.

What Advocates Can Do Now:

- Advocates may choose to engage with lawmakers (particularly freshman congressional leaders) on the importance of early learning and CCDBG to lay make the connection prior to the beginning of the budget season.

Resources:

- Here is the [press conference archive](#) of Senator Murray’s (and other Democrats) push for child care support.
- [FFYF Federal Guide to Early Learning and Care Programs](#)
- [FFYF Intro to Early Learning and Care in the 118th Congress](#)
- [FFYF Early Learning and Child Care: Unaffordable, Unattainable, Unsustainable](#)
- [FFYF ABCs of Federal Early Learning and Child Care Funding Streams](#)

What’s next: Child Nutrition
(Mary Beth Testa)

None of the early childhood/child nutrition items we thought would make it into the end of year omnibus bill made it in, although the legislation made [summer EBT permanent](#). Unfortunately, the pay-for that Congress adopted for this permanent change was to lower SNAP benefit amounts by reverting to amounts available prior to the pandemic.

The Senate Agriculture Committee is going to be very busy with the Farm Bill and other reauthorizations and is unlikely to take up the separate Child Nutrition reauthorization. Because the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) program wasn’t included during last Congress, the best time to get the attention of the Senate Agriculture Committee is right after they complete the Farm Bill. Rep. Bonamici wants to reintroduce the CACFP Program bill.

In addition, advocates are very concerned about the expiration of the Keep Kids Fed Act.

What Advocates Can Do Now:

- If advocates choose to reach out to congressional members and invite them or their staff on site for a visit, think about taking them into a program during meal times, in order to share how increased grocery costs have impacted their program.

Resources:

- [Child Nutrition and the Farm Bill side-by-side comparison](#)
- Feeding America released a statement on the [House and Senate Passage of Transformative Child Nutrition Provisions in the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Spending Bill](#) and what it means to have permanent summer EBT.

- The Food Research and Action Center published an article on how summer EBT permanence was paid for: "[Offset in Omnibus Would Cut SNAP and Hasten Hunger Cliff for Millions.](#)"
- *Fortune* published an article about the [child care crisis and its effect on rural families](#).

End on a High Note

Ben Gies (Prichard Committee)

Ben Gies noted that the Prichard Committee [received](#) a Community Schools Grant through the Department of Education that will be used over the next five years to bring wraparound services to Kentucky's K-12 schools, beginning in several districts and specific schools within those particular districts. The grant is investing in both the networking and the organization as the Prichard Committee grows from a team of six to a team of twenty over the next year!

Additional Resources

Upcoming Webinar Opportunities

- The Alliance for Early Success and the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative/Raising Child Care Fund are hosting a webinar on February 16th at 2pm ET titled "Reset and Renew: What Aligned Campaigns Learned from Setbacks". Learn more about the webinar and register [here](#).

CCDBG and Use of Federal Funding Resources

- CLASP published their "[CCDBG FY 2023 State-by-State Appropriations Distribution Estimates and Increases](#)".
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities published "[How States Can Best Use Federal Fiscal Recovery Funds: Lessons From State Choices So Far](#)".

Committee Roster Resources

- [House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Rosters](#)
- [Senate Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Rosters](#)

118th Congressional House Rules Resources

- [The House Rules Package of the 118th Congress](#).
- The Congressional Research Service published a summary of "[Changes to House Rules Affecting the Congressional Budget Process Included in H.Res. 5](#)".
- The Congressional Progressive Caucus Center published a summary of "[Navigating New Rules in a New Congress](#)".