



To Wisconsin Policymakers:

Wisconsin is at a workforce crossroads, presenting significant and pressing challenges for businesses. We recognize child care shortages for children of all ages hinder working families' ability to enter, re-enter, or remain in the workforce. As business and economic development leaders, we cannot remain on the sidelines of this crisis any longer.

The bottom line is without accessible, high-quality, and affordable child care, attracting and retaining employees will remain a pressing challenge. We therefore ask you to advance a significant long-term state investment in child care in the 2023-25 state budget because inaction will further shutter child care programs and continue to hamper vital efforts to stabilize the workforce.

The lack of accessible, high-quality child care impacts employers of every size and industry. It is now more acute than ever, and, for business, it is affecting profits and growth. Hiring demands across the state and across sectors continue to increase as Wisconsin's economy grows, but the labor pool is not growing at the same rate. Child care challenges impact businesses in a variety of ways:

- **High turnover**
- **Frequent absenteeism**
- **Productivity decline**
- **Recruitment challenges for high-need, highly skilled professionals**
- **Scheduling and shift changes, especially for those who work during non-traditional hours**

It is especially troubling that this is not a new crisis. It has taken decades of very limited state support and an inherent market failure of the child care business model to get Wisconsin to where it is today. Child care programs operate on razor-thin margins with budgets balanced on parent fees, which, despite being costly to families, do not cover the full cost of programs providing high-quality care. The pandemic placed a glaring spotlight on this longstanding problem, and pandemic federal funding provided long-overdue relief to keep current child care programs open during the height of COVID-19. However, the federal relief did not, and was not, intended to address the flaws of the existing system. As a result, most child care programs are still struggling and remain at a critical breaking point, which, in turn, impacts our ability to recruit and retain employees.

A significant state investment in high-quality child care will result in an important variety of positive business outcomes, including employee performance, productivity, and safer, higher quality operations. This is particularly important in a manufacturing-heavy state like Wisconsin.

Wisconsin families need access to high-quality, affordable childcare to participate in the workforce, and our businesses need a stable workforce to operate efficiently and grow. As such, the above-named employers, organizations, and leaders in Wisconsin's business and economic development community are writing today to request your support for a strong state investment in child care in the 2023-25 biennial budget. We simply cannot afford to invest any less.

Respectfully,

Wisconsin Restaurant Association	Lincoln County Economic Development Corp.	Daniel Educational Services
Greater Milwaukee Committee		Karavan Trailers, LLC
Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce	Chippewa Valley Technical College	Polk County Economic Development Corporation
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative	Madison Area Technical College	Silver Spring Foods
Rhineland Area Chamber of Commerce	Langlade County Economic Development Corporation	TASC
Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation	Main Street Alliance	OEM Fabricators, Inc.
Middleton Chamber of Commerce	Greater Oshkosh EDC	BCDI-Milwaukee
	Southwest Health	Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce
	Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry	North Central Community Action Program, Inc.

Madison Region Economic Partnership	Candice Olson	Circle M Market Farm
Forward Service Corporation	One City Schools	Rule of Design Inc.
Mid-State Technical College	Wonderstate Coffee	Cadre Restaurant
Heather Logelin, President & CEO, St. Croix Valley Foundation	Morris Ramen	Bloodgood Foto LLC
Crave Brothers Farm / Farmstead Cheese	Ancora	Likewise Coffee & Bakery
Specialty Cheese Company, Inc.	Irene Strohbeen and Associates, LLC	Odd Duck
7 Rivers Alliance	Citizen Action of WI	Reedsburg Industrial Development Commission
The Marquardt	Chads Design Build	EZ Office Products
Dodge County Housing Authority	Joni Anderson	Reedsburg Area Medical Center, Inc.
Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation	Rafat Arain	United Way Fox Cities
Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association	Hovde Creative	Glory Global Solutions
Wisconsin Youth Company	Peter K. Todd	Bender, Larson, Chidley, Koppes & Associates, S.C.
Dynatect Manufacturing, Inc.	Hinterland Brewery & Restaurant	United Way of Sheboygan County
City of Wausau	Your Virtual Advocate	Sheboygan County Community Partnership for Children
Envision Greater Fond du Lac	Rule of Design, Inc.	The Health Nut
Chaney Marketing Strategy LLC	Women's Fund for the Fox Valley Region	Gina Covelli, United Way of Sheboygan County
City of Beaver Dam	Daughters and Co.	Oneida County Childcare Coalition
First 5 Fox Valley	Zambaldi Beer	Sweeternative Baking
Rusty Silo Co.	Salvatore's Tomato Pies	Jason Scott
Building Our Future	Lazy Susan MKE	Upper Midwest Alliance of YMCAs
United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley	Marketini Media	
United Way of Door County	Lion's Mouth Bookstore	
Northcentral Technical College- Early Childhood Education	Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region	
Dodge County Community Development Administrator	Design4Kids	
Becket's Restaurant / Wagner Market Oshkosh	Doyenne Group, Inc.	
	Dane Buy Local	
	Coulee Bicycle Co	
	Annette Look	
	Lauren Faith Smith Ministry for Nonviolence	