

Support for the Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act in New Mexico

The Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act has also been endorsed by numerous organizations, elected officials, and policymakers across New Mexico, including NM Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham; New Mexico Voices for Children; Young Women United; New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands Stephanie Garcia Richard; NM State Representative Javier Martinez; Charles Goodmacher, Government Relations Director, National Education Association (New Mexico); and Stephanie Ly, President, American Federation of Teachers (New Mexico). Read the statements of support:

“That child care and early learning opportunities might be available to some and not all in this country is a failure of willpower. We have the capacity. We understand the benefits. And now we must deliver. I’m inspired and encouraged by leaders like Sen. Warren and Rep. Haaland, who are fighting hard for equitable, comprehensive and bold improvements in access and quality of early childhood education and care. With their vision, and with support from stakeholders across the spectrum, I’m confident we will, once and for all, realize the essential vision of high-quality universal child care in this country.” -- **NM Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham**

“High-quality child care is essential to New Mexico’s families and economy – allowing hard-working parents to provide for their children while ensuring they are in safe and appropriate early learning environments that prepare them for success in school and life,” said James Jimenez, executive director for the child advocacy organization New Mexico Voices for Children. “High-quality child care costs more than tuition at the University of New Mexico – but there’s no student loans or Pell Grants, so that puts it out of reach for many working parents. This legislation is exactly what the nation needs – comprehensive federal support for a nationwide problem. Rep. Haaland knows what it’s like to be a working parent trying to provide the best care and education for her daughter and she’s translated that life experience into an excellent public policy that has been needed for decades.” -- **New Mexico Voices for Children**

“As a mother and a New Mexican I know that affordable childcare is a basic need, crucial to strong economies. This legislation is an important step in building New Mexican communities where women and people of color can continue to provide for our families with dignity and respect.” -- **Charlene Bencomo, Executive Director, Young Women United**

“New Mexico needs universal pre-k and universal early childhood education, and we need it now. I support Senator Warren and Congresswoman Haaland’s legislation to create this system at the federal level, and I have already been fighting to assure New Mexico is ready to pitch in where we can to fund this locally. I was the first Land Commissioner in New Mexico history to support using a percentage of our \$19 billion Land Grant Permanent Fund for early childhood education. This fund grows exponentially every year while our kids fall further and further behind. It’s time to look at every option on the table and I applaud the efforts of Senator Warren and our Congresswoman to put our kids and their futures first.” -- **NM Commissioner of Public Lands Stephanie Garcia Richard**

“I applaud Congresswoman Halland’s commitment to early childhood education. The first three years of a child’s life are the most critical and investing in these early interventions is the most

effective way to ensure that every child, no matter who they are, has the chance to succeed.” --
NM State Representative Javier Martinez

“Representative Haaland’s fierce determination to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed in school—and in life—proves she understands how to move New Mexico and America forward.” -- **Charles Goodmacher, Government Relations Director, NEA-New Mexico**

"We applaud Congresswoman Debra Haaland for co-sponsoring the "Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act" with Senator Elizabeth Warren. Rep. Haaland's commitment to New Mexico's earliest learners and their families is unwavering - partly based on her own personal experiences as a single mother, one which she has shared with too many other New Mexican families - and is reinforced by the continuing needs of her district and our communities. We are especially appreciative each early learning center funded through this Act would provide wrap-around supports like mental and physical health services, dental services, and extended hours and after school care for our students. As educators, we are ready to work with anyone who is seeking to tackle this desperately needed issue for thousands of New Mexico families, and are ready to stand with Rep. Haaland as she fights for better and more equitable educational opportunities for our students." -- **Stephanie Ly, President, AFT New Mexico**