



U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

1139 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Washington, DC 20515

May 28, 2026

The Honorable Robert Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphry Building
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I strongly urge you to immediately reverse your recent actions to make child care more expensive, less safe, and harder to find for parents.

Job creation has been at a standstill for nearly a year, inflation is at its highest level in three years, and the gap between the cost of living and wages is continuing to grow in the Trump economy. The last thing parents need is to also lose their child care, have to pay bigger child care bills, or leave their children with a provider who doesn't have enough staff to keep children safe.

This month HHS has taken a range of actions to make it harder for parents to find safe, affordable child care so that they can work, puzzlingly characterized as a "Mother's Day gift." The new policies will reduce wages for Head Start teachers and child care workers, make each worker responsible for meeting the needs of more babies and toddlers, increase child care copayments for parents, divert funding Congress provided to reduce the cost of child care to fund homeschooling payments, and force safe, loving child care providers out of business.

Your latest harmful actions will compound the damage you have already done to the fraught experience of being a working parent. Previously, you arbitrarily froze child care funding to states without any evidence of fraud, which blocked childcare vouchers for parents and paychecks for child care providers until a court of law stopped you. Then you encouraged baseless harassment of child care providers and the families they served, making providing child care dangerous, as well as poorly paid.

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Your actions are the opposite of what mothers across the country have asked us to do. They have spoken loud and clear. Congress and the President need to take immediate action to ensure that parents can easily find convenient, affordable child care that keeps their children safe and cared for while they are at work.

I urge you to reverse your harmful action and instead work with Congress to help parents find the right child care in the right place, at the right price. That would be a real Mother's Day (and Father's Day) gift to Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard E. Neal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent and the last name "Neal" following in a similar style.

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Ranking Member