



ARIZONA CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION

June 1, 2010

The Honorable Janice K. Brewer
Governor of Arizona
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor Brewer,

We want to again bring to your attention the devastating impact of the continued "hard cap" waiting list on child care for low income working families. To date, over 13,000 children have been placed on the waiting list. The cuts to child care are disproportionate to the state's revenue problems, jeopardize the safety of children, result in lost employment opportunities for parents, and are having a serious negative economic impact by reducing employment and damaging private businesses and non-profit organizations.

We fully understand the unprecedented decline in state revenues and understand that some reductions were necessary. Yet, with revenues projected at Fiscal Year 2004 levels, the child care subsidy program is being cut below 2004 service levels. The program's caseload is operating below levels that can be sustained with federal dollars and minimal matching funds.

When families leave the program, they are not being replaced with eligible families who have been waiting, some as long as 15 months. They face the prospect of having to wait 13 more months or longer. Overall child care assistance is being reduced by 50% and child care for low income working families is being cut by at least 76%. The dramatic decline of investment in child care jeopardizes the entire child care infrastructure that all working parents and employers rely on. Continued reductions of State support will result in more centers closing, particularly in low income neighborhoods.

Members of the Arizona Child Care Association and the Early Care and Education Consortium who struggle every day to continue to providing safe learning environments for children contributed to a video message that describes the impacts of the waiting list. This message is being circulated to the Legislature today as well. To view the video, go to <http://azcca.org/restore-child-care-video>

In the current environment, it is easy for the impact of one program to get lost among more high profile issues. Yet, the longer families wait, the more it hurts parents, children, and child care providers. It is time to remove children off the "waiting" list and into child care programs. We respectfully request your review of these impacts and reconsideration of the "hard cap". Please let us know if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Bruce Liggett
Executive Director