



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

May 16, 2019

KATHLEEN C. HOCHUL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Dear Co-Chair:

Every New Yorker needs access to affordable, high-quality child care, to ensure that parents can fully participate in the workforce and contribute to the economy. Child care is a \$4.3 billion industry in New York, with an economic impact of nearly \$8.6 billion and 172,000 jobs. By investing in child care, we are furthering state and regional economic growth. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and to maximize the impact, we need public-private partnerships.

Over 60% of New Yorkers live in a child care desert—defined as more than 50 children under age 5 with no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots.

As Co-Chair of Governor Cuomo's recent Child Care Availability Task Force, I am using every possible avenue to ensure that this issue is receiving the attention it deserves. The Task Force is a group of experts focused on developing innovative solutions to improve access to quality, affordable child care in New York by 2020. Governor Cuomo tasked the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) to include child care as a priority in the 2019 Strategic Plans. Businesses have the flexibility to strengthen our workforce and serve as a template for others to follow.

We are asking each Council to consider the child care needs of your region and the unique barriers families face in your decision making. The Council can address the issues that impact businesses including chronic absence, productivity reductions, and turnover due to inadequate options for child care. Insufficient child care options cost U.S. businesses more than \$3 billion annually and negatively impacts the New York State economy. We also know that child care contributes to the gender wage gap.

Your leadership role on the REDCs as a Co-Chair is critical to change the dialogue. The REDCs can empower the private industry to develop regionally-specific strategies to increase access to quality, affordable child care. It is a unique opportunity to address child care and community needs while closing the wage gap.

I am asking that while you are forming your Regional priorities, you encourage applications from projects that consider solutions to child care such as providing on-site child-care, child-care co-ops with other businesses, flexible scheduling and remote work. I believe that the REDCs are uniquely equipped as an institution working to create solutions that will have lasting impact on working parents and their children while enhancing our state's productivity.

I thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hochul
Chair, Regional Economic Development Councils