

# CHILD CARE IS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND NEEDS SUSTAINABLE STATE INVESTMENT!

## thread's FY2025 Policy Agenda

Quality child care in Alaska is more difficult to find and is more costly for families than ever before. There are fewer trained professionals in the workforce and financial insecurity for child care programs. The child care sector is in a crisis.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, **148 child care businesses have closed statewide representing a loss of more than 20% of Alaska's quality child care programs.**

Please Support an Additional \$30.5M in the Operating Budget for the Child Care Program Office

### SMALL BUSINESSES: \$15.5M

- \$10M for annual grants to child care programs to support stable operations.
- \$3M for Learn & Grow, Alaska's Quality Recognition & Improvement System.
- \$1.5M for strengthening Child Care Licensing, training and technical assistance for those interested in child care entrepreneurship\*.
- \$1M for child care business recruitment, including small business startup support and specialized training for new child care administrators\*.

### EARLY EDUCATORS/WORKFORCE: \$8M

- \$7M to continue the successful early educator wage stipend program\* and make it annual.
- \$750K to expand teacher wellness support, including telehealth support.
- \$250K for access to professional development training and support, including small business/management resources\*.

### FAMILIES: \$7M

- \$7M for expanding eligibility to Child Care Assistance for families. This funding could increase access to child care for thousands of Alaskan families.

\*Governor's Child Care Task Force Priority

**25,000** MORE PARENTS could enter the Alaskan workforce if they had access to affordable child care.

CHILD CARE helps Alaskan parents earn **\$4.6 Billion** in wages.

A **\$30.5 Million** INVESTMENT IN CHILD CARE will keep Alaska competitive in support of a better quality of life for families to stay and grow.

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