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United Way  
of Kentucky



September 25, 2020

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell  
Senator Rand Paul  
Representative Andy Barr  
Representative James Comer  
Representative Brett Guthrie  
Representative Thomas Massie  
Representative Hal Rogers  
Representative John Yarmuth

Honorable Members of Kentucky's Congressional Delegation:

Thank you for your continued focus on addressing the COVID-19 crisis and fighting for Kentucky's families and communities. As you know, nearly 55,000 Kentuckians have been infected and more than 1,000 have died as a result of the pandemic. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians are facing economic uncertainty due to job loss, reduced hours, and the inability to find child care.

**The undersigned executives of the Kentucky United Way network are asking you to act now to mitigate further impact on Kentucky's children, families, workforce, and economy.** As the pandemic continues, the nonprofit sector is joining forces with government to serve more residents than ever, but without Congressional action, unemployment, housing instability, food insecurity, mental health, addiction, and safety remain ever present concerns, with communities of color facing heavily disproportionate impacts. Foundational to many of these issues is the child care emergency, which grows more desperate each day as more providers face insolvency and close permanently.

We know families depend on K-12 schools and child care for the education and supervision of their children. In fact, in our recent statewide survey of parent perspectives on child care, more than 70% reported also having school-age children. To ensure the success of their children and their careers in the best of times, parents need both. But now, in a moment when most schools cannot consistently provide in-person instruction, child care is the only support for working parents. The results of delayed investment are children without care, parents without options, and businesses without employees. The needs of child care providers—which are, indeed, the needs of our families and the business community—must be given priority in any COVID-19 legislation. **We urge Kentucky's Congressional delegation to support a \$50 billion investment in child care.**

**The next relief package should also include investment in Medicaid to help cover newly uninsured people and protect those already enrolled as state budgets tighten. At the same time, we encourage Congress to provide robust funding for state and local aid, increase food assistance through SNAP, match the unemployment subsidy rate provided in the CARES Act, and extend the eviction moratorium to bolster state and family economic security during the pandemic. We also believe that targeted aid to communities of color can address disproportionate positivity rates and financial instability for families hit hardest by both the public health and economic crises.**

On behalf of the communities and families we serve across this great Commonwealth, we urge you to act swiftly to negotiate a bipartisan agreement that will provide substantial aid to our nonprofits, our communities, and our state and local governments while strengthening vital safety-net programs to lead Kentucky through this unparalleled moment and help us build back to a thriving future.

Thank you for your leadership.

Respectfully, in partnership,

Kevin T. Middleton, President  
United Way of Kentucky

Debbie Hills, President and CEO  
United Way of Southern Kentucky

Stephanie Blevins, Executive Director  
Heart of Kentucky United Way

Don Howerton, Executive Director  
United Way of the Coalfield

Betsy Bond, Executive Director  
United Way of the Pennyrile

Timothy Johnson, President and CEO  
United Way of the Bluegrass

Betsy Burkeen, Executive Director  
United Way of Paducah-McCracken County

Judy Nicholson, Executive Director  
United Way of Laurel County

Ellen Cartmell, Executive Director  
United Way of Mason County

Theresa Reno-Weber, President and CEO  
Metro United Way

Melissa Clements, Executive Director  
United Way of Henderson County

Laura Sedlatschek, Executive Director  
Tri-County Kentucky United Way

Kristin Collins, Executive Director  
United Way of Southeastern Kentucky

Gerald Washington, Executive Director  
Murray-Calloway County United Way

Jerri Compton, Executive Director  
United Way of Northeast Kentucky

Moira Weir, President and CEO  
United Way of Greater Cincinnati

Crystal Cox, Executive Director  
United Way of South Central Kentucky

Joe Fowler, President and CEO  
United Way of Central Kentucky