

**Grow, strengthen the state's early care and education system through an FY24 budget that includes the funding levels outlined in Governor Pritzker's *Smart Start Illinois* proposal
HB2319 (L. Hernandez), SB289 (Lightford)**

- **Increases, at a minimum, funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) by \$75 million.** There are not enough slots to serve all children who could benefit from the program, nor are those working in many programs compensated adequately. Funds would allow ISBE to increase compensation for those working with infants and toddlers and those employed by community-based organizations. Additional funding could be used to create new slots for infants and toddlers, expand doula services, and increase the quality of existing programs.
- **Increases, at a minimum, funding for child care, including CCAP, by \$200 million.** State GRF for the CCAP program was cut by \$20.0 million in FY22 and flat funded in the FY23 budget. While the Pritzker administration and the ILGA directed considerable relief funds to the child care system over the last few years, those federal dollars are temporary and soon set to expire. Additional state funding could be used to increase provider reimbursement rates, especially for those serving infants and toddlers, support upfront contracts to providers, and expand eligibility to the program, among other program improvements.
- **Increases, at a minimum, funding for the Early Intervention (EI) program by \$40 million.** The number of children receiving services continues to rise while the number of credentialed EI providers has fallen, leading to historic levels of service delays for families and overworked (and underpaid) providers and service coordinators. New funding would allow IDHS to address the impending workforce crisis by improving provider compensation and increasing salaries and lowering caseloads for service coordinators.
- **Increases, at a minimum, funding for voluntary home visiting programs** (Maternal and Child Home Visiting Program, Healthy Families —Department of Human Services) **by \$5 million.** FY23 was the first year in which the ILGA increased appropriations for these grant programs in two decades. Additional funds could be used to move wages for home visitors closer to the state's recommended salary levels. Remaining funds could also be used to expand program access, particularly prenatal services.

Support legislation to create a state family and medical leave insurance program. Robust paid family leave policies give parents the opportunity in the first weeks of life to focus on their role as a parent and on the well-being of their child, particularly when affordable, quality infant care is in low supply and licensed child care is not available until a baby is six weeks old.

HB1530 (Harper), SB1234 (Villivalam)

Support legislation to extend the sunset re: staffing flexibility in state preschool classrooms.

There is a shortage of licensed teachers able to work in state-funded preschool programs. Educators pursuing their teaching license can teach in a preschool classroom if they hold certain credentials and pass the ECE content test or complete nine semester hours in early childhood. This staffing flexibility, granted to programs in [PA 100-645](#), should be extended another five (5) years.

SB2390 (Pacione-Zayas)

Support legislation to codify the state's existing IDHS home visiting programs in law. The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) has funded and administered evidence-based home visiting programs for several decades. The Human Services Act should be updated to provide a set of broad parameters for how the state's home visiting programs should operate.

SB1794 (Pacione-Zayas)