



# Early Childhood Advocacy Day

*Training*



**UNITED *for***  
**BRIGHTER**  
**FUTURES**

Early Childhood Advocacy Day 2024

# Welcome & Introductions



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**Why does early  
childhood  
education  
matter?**



What do you think are the benefits of early childhood education?



## Top 5 Benefits of Early Childhood Education

- 1 Fosters healthy development
- 2 Eases transition & prepares children for school
- 3 Closes achievement gap
- 4 Improved health outcomes
- 5 Generates a 13 % annual return on investment





# Early Childhood Education (Snapshot)

## CHILDREN UNDER 5 IN ILLINOIS



~800k

kids under the age of 5 today;  
~450k are under the age of 3  
~ 350k are between 3-4 yrs  
old



~40%

are classified as low  
income



~60%

in Cook and collar  
counties, with  
~20% of all kids & 1/3  
of low income kids in  
Chicago

# ECE Programs and Funding Sources

- **Early Intervention**  
*State and Federal*
- **Home Visiting**  
*State and Federal*
- **Early Head Start/ Head Start**  
*State and Federal*
- **Prevention Initiative**  
*State*
- **Preschool For All**  
*State*
- **Child Care Assistance Program** *(CCAP, Federal, State, and Parent Co-Pay)*

# State Level Advocacy



STATE ACTORS & CURRENT AFFAIRS

## What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is supporting, defending, or arguing for a cause or idea in public to influence opinion, policy, and resource allocation.

## The Role of Advocates

Advocates work to bring about change by raising awareness, organizing campaigns, and engaging with policymakers and the public.

## Early Childhood Advocacy

Advocacy in the early childhood education and child care (ECEC) space involves actively supporting and promoting the rights and needs of young children and their families.



# Types of Advocacy

## Self Advocacy

**Speaking up for yourself:** expressing your needs, interests, and rights effectively.

## Individual Advocacy

**Empowering others to** assert their autonomy, personal voice, and rights.

## Systemic Advocacy

**Creating change for everyone:** fixing the whole system so that it works better for everyone, not just for one person (i.e. laws, policies, and practices).

## Public Awareness Advocacy

**Spreading the word for change:** raising attention and spreading information (i.e. events, campaigns, and media efforts).

## Legislative Advocacy

**Making laws work for people:** influencing the creation and amendment of laws and policies. Including working with lawmakers, policy makers, and stakeholders.

# Legislative Process

## Convening

Legislators meet  
January-May

## Bill Types

**Appropriation:** proposing budget items  
**Substantive:** proposing significant law change  
**Revisory:** proposing amendments to current laws  
**Shell/vehicle bills:** placeholder for legislation

## Committees/Readings

Introducing bills and assigning them to committees, followed by debates and amendments.

## Veto session

Legislative period to reconsider bills rejected

## Lame duck session

Period after an election but before new officials take office, during which outgoing officials continue to serve and may address unfinished legislative business

# Advocacy Targets

## Decision Makers

The Governor



State Legislators in the House and Senate



## Influencers

Individuals or groups who have access to the decision-makers and who may be able to influence them. Influencers may become partners in the advocacy plan.

i.e. Associations, organizations, families, providers, ECEC experts and other professionals, faith-based groups, opinion leaders, the media, researchers, academics

# Why is their role important to you?

- **ACCOUNTABLE TO YOU**
- **WRITES LAWS**
- **VOTE ON PROPOSED LAWS**
- **IN ADDITION TO WRITING/PASSING LAWS, LEGISLATORS TAKE PART IN CREATING AN ANNUAL BUDGET FOR GOV'NT PROGRAMS.**



# Budget Process



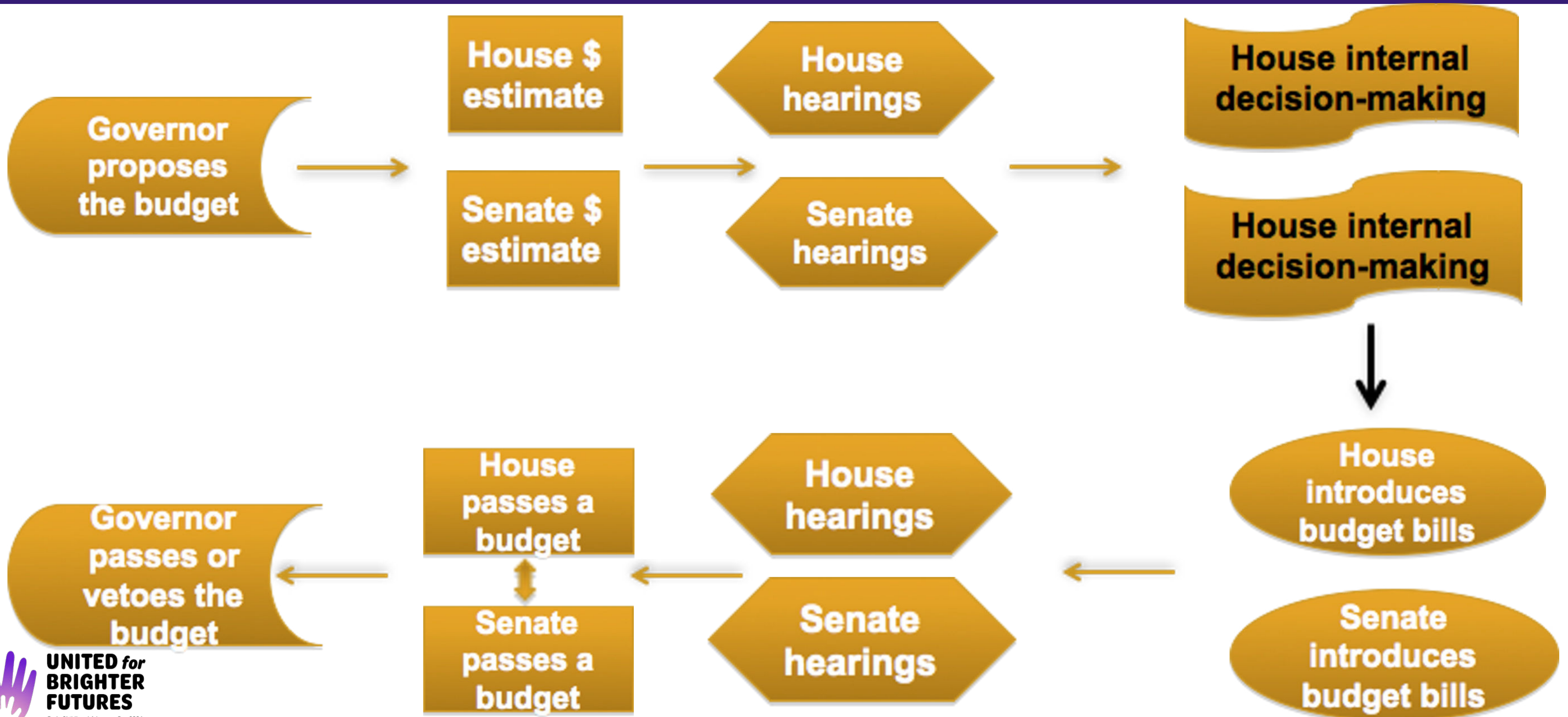
**What is  
happening  
with our state  
budget?**

**Need to pass a balanced budget  
every year**



In order to pass a balanced budget annually, legislators must prioritize numerous objectives, often necessitating cuts in programs or maintaining current funding levels, advocates want to ensure early childhood remains a priority

# Where are we in the budget process?



What are we asking  
legislators to do?





# New Agency Legislation



## **SB1/HB5451**

Create a new undefined state agency focused on  
early childhood  
Budget

New Department of Early Childhood: **\$13.2  
million appropriation**

# FY25 ECE Budget Priorities



**1**

Early Childhood Block Grant: **\$75 million increase (11.1% increase from FY24)**

**2**

Child Care: **\$158.5 million increase (27.2% increase from FY24)**

**3**

Early Intervention: **\$40 million increase**

**4**

IDHS Home Visiting: **\$5 million increase (21.8% increase from FY24)**

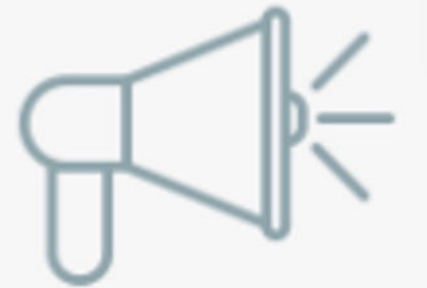
**5**

ECACE: **\$60 million appropriation**

New Department of Early Childhood: **\$13.2 million appropriation**

# Take Action

## Ask Your Legislator to Increase Funding for Early Childhood in FY25!



On February 21, Governor Pritzker announced his proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget that includes exciting investments in the new Department of Early Childhood, year two of the Smart Start Illinois initiative, and other important early childhood programs. However, the proposal falls short in a few key areas, with insufficient investment in vital programs that bolster access to support for young children.

**Investments in the new Department of Early Childhood and year two of Smart Start Illinois are BIG priorities for early childhood advocates. However, Illinois must increase funds for the entire early childhood education and care system and make the investments outlined in [SB3814/](#) [HB5782](#)!**

### Review Your Message

- State Senator
- State Representative

#### Subject

Increase Funding for Early Childhood in FY25!

#### Message Body

Please add your own story about this issue to personalize your message

Now is the time for Illinois to build on the progress that was made last year with the introduction of Smart Start Illinois and continue to prioritize Illinois' youngest children and their families.

# Effective Advocacy Strategies



# Advocacy Strategies

## Letter writing

Writing a letter to influence opinion and action

## Education

Workshops and raising awareness

## Legislative meetings

Meeting with legislators to express interests

## Communications and Media

Spreading the word through newsletters, social media posts, and press releases

## And many more!

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# Crafting Your Elevator Pitch: ECAD Legislative Meetings

An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech that you can use to spark interest on a subject and/or idea you'd like buy-in for.

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# Tips in Crafting Your Elevator Pitch

- IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL
  - START WITH YOUR NAME
  - COMMUNICATE WHAT YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT AND WHY
  - IDENTIFY THE BARRIER OR PROBLEM THAT AFFECTS THIS PASSION
  - USE STORYTELLING TO MAKE YOUR SPEECH MORE RELATABLE
  - REINFORCE YOUR PASSION AND/OR YOUR ORGANIZATION'S REASON FOR ENGAGING IN THIS WORK
  - PRACTICE
-

# COFI



# SEIU Child Care for All



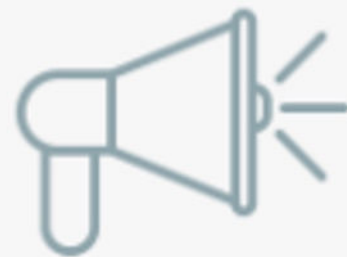
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# What to Expect: Early Childhood Advocacy Day 2024

# Agenda At A Glance

[United for Brighter Futures](#)

[Early Childhood Advocacy Day 2024](#)



**6:30-10:30 a.m. Morning Travel  
to President Abraham Lincoln,  
Springfield**

**10:30 a.m. Welcome**

**11:00 a.m. Legislative Session  
Overview & Early Childhood  
Education Priorities**

**11:30 a.m. Depart for the  
Capitol, or, Advocacy Training  
and Q&A**

**11:30-1:45 p.m. Legislative  
Activities at Capitol**

**1:45 p.m. End Capitol Activities**

**2:00 p.m, Buses depart**

# Q & A?

Thank you for joining us!