



For Immediate Release

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For More Information:

Natalie Renew, Executive Director

natalie@homegrownchildcare.org

**Home Grown Endorses the Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act
Introduced in the US Senate by Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)**

The early childhood workforce in family child care, Early Head Start, Head Start, and child care centers is working tirelessly to ensure children receive healthy, adequate food that supports their growth and learning. Yet studies show that one out of three child care providers regularly worries about having enough to eat at the end of the month.

The goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to partially subsidize food costs in child care settings. For child care providers serving cash-strapped families, CACFP reimbursement is an essential part of a budget that allows their child care program to stay open and available.

This important legislation would:

- Add another meal service to be reimbursed in CACFP when this 3rd meal is offered 8 hours after the first meal service of the program day.
- Change the payment policy so that family child care programs in CACFP are reimbursed based on "food away from home," the way child care centers' rates are calculated.
- Call on the Secretary of USDA to review the CACFP Serious Deficiency Process.
- Establish an Advisory Committee on CACFP paperwork.

"Time and again we hear from home-based child care providers that the current CACFP policy of two meals and one snack simply isn't enough for hungry young children spending a full day in child care," said Alexandra Patterson, Home Grown Director of Policy and Strategy.

For many children, the food provided while at child care is their primary source of food, and without a robust CACFP program, they are faced with missing out on the adequate nutrition they need to grow healthy bodies and minds.



“Despite the current shortcomings for reimbursement within CACFP, we’ve never met a child care provider who would let a child go hungry if they could do something about it. This means providers across the nation are frequently put in the position of providing food from their own family’s pantry and increasing the likelihood of facing food insecurity themselves. We must not allow this trend to continue. Home Grown thanks Sen. Bob Casey for championing this important policy change to invest in meals and snacks in child care,” said Natalie Renew, Home Grown Executive Director.

Home Grown is proud to endorse the Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act in the U.S. House of Representatives and now in the U.S. Senate. We look forward to working with members of Congress to help accomplish our shared goal of keeping our kids fed.

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