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March 13, 2014

**Support the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (S. 1086)
Oppose Any Weakening Amendments**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we urge swift reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (S. 1086). This bipartisan legislation offers an opportunity to focus on the importance of access to affordable, high-quality child care for children, families, and our nation's economy. We applaud the leadership of both parties and committee chairs for their commitment to a bipartisan bill. In order to preserve the bipartisan consensus and to expedite this long-overdue reauthorization, we urge you to vote for a clean bill, without weakening amendments.

Since the Child Care and Development Block Grant was last reauthorized in 1996, research and innovative state approaches have taught us much about how to improve the quality of child care and after-school care and how to make child care assistance more accessible to their families. This bill incorporates lessons from the research and states in an effort to better protect the health and safety of children in care, improve the quality of care overall and for infants and toddlers in particular, facilitate children and families' sustained access to help paying for care, promote stable child care arrangements, and support providers serving families receiving child care assistance.

S. 1086 also helps achieve the goal of keeping children safe in child care. It includes appropriate background checks of workers, which are a critical part of ensuring the safety of children and the civil rights of workers protecting our children.

S.1086 is an important part of the effort to increase the overall quality of all child care programs across the country. We urge you to vote for a clean reauthorization, with no weakening amendments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lexer Quamie, Senior Counsel, at quamie@civilrights.org or (202) 466-3648. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
President & CEO

Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President