

# ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### ASSEMBLY, No. 5863

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 9, 2021

The Assembly Women and Children Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill 5863.

This bill establishes the Child Care Revitalization Fund, a dedicated, non-lapsing fund to be administered by the Department of Children and Families for the purpose of providing financial support to the State's licensed child care providers. The bill authorizes the Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with the Commissioner of Human Services and the Chief Executive of the Economic Development Authority, to develop processes by which licensed child care providers may submit, through an online portal, applications for assistance through the fund, and by which the allocation of resources from the fund may be prioritized. Authorized allocations from the fund are to be disbursed to licensed child care providers within 21 days of the department's receipt of a qualifying application, as submitted by a provider through the online portal established pursuant to this act, prior to September 1, 2021.

It is the intent of the bill's sponsors to provide critical assistance to the State's licensed child care providers who were severely impacted by high operating costs and reduced capacity required to mitigate the effects of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Numerous surveys conducted since the start of the pandemic evidence the staggering number of working mothers who have had to choose between caring for their young children and their careers. Without a sufficient network of high quality, affordable licensed child care providers in our communities, parents of young children will be unable to return to work on a full-time as the State economy reopens in the coming months, and the State's economic recovery will falter.