

JACKIE SPEIER  
14TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

2465 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0514  
(202) 225-3531  
FAX: (202) 226-4183

155 BOVET ROAD, SUITE 780  
SAN MATEO, CA 94402  
(650) 342-0300  
FAX: (650) 375-8270

WWW.SPEIER.HOUSE.GOV  
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JACKIESPEIER  
WWW.TWITTER.COM/REPSPEIER

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0514

March 26, 2021

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
CHAIRWOMAN, MILITARY PERSONNEL  
STRATEGIC FORCES  
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
COUNTERTERRORISM, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE,  
AND COUNTERPROLIFERATION  
INTELLIGENCE MODERNIZATION AND READINESS  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND REFORM  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
ENVIRONMENT  
Co-Chair, Democratic Women's Caucus  
Senior Whip

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

As the Chair of the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee, I am grateful for your longstanding efforts to support America's military families. I write to raise my deep concern that we have a crisis in child care for all American families and particularly for military families. Quite simply, the military services have not adequately maintained their existing Child Development Centers (CDCs), and they have not made sufficient efforts to expand capacity to meet the needs of children of servicemembers.

Your administration's infrastructure proposal is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a transformative difference in this problem facing our military families. I ask you to include a major investment of \$5 billion for Military Child Development Center facility construction and repairs as part of your infrastructure proposal, with the funds targeted to CDCs in poor or failing condition and CDC projects that would add capacity in regions with the largest waitlists for military families.

Last year, the Department of Defense (DoD) disclosed stunning information about the scope and impact of the backlog in child care facility projects. The "Report to the Congressional Defense Committees on Department of Defense Child Development Programs," published in June 2020, indicated that, of DoD's 761 CDCs, only 378 are in "Good" condition, with 135 in "Poor" or "Failing" condition due to deferred maintenance and the high cost of needed repairs, risking the health and wellbeing of children. Meanwhile, capacity is insufficient, with nearly 9,000 children of servicemembers stuck on a waitlist despite immediate need for child care, making it difficult for military spouses to work outside the home. Almost half of the waitlist is concentrated in just four locations with the highest demand for and the longest waitlists for child care: Norfolk, San Diego, Hawaii, and the National Capital Region, but intractable waitlists are problems for military families in many other locations as well, including North Carolina, Colorado, Washington State, Texas, and Germany.

The task ahead is daunting—the military Services have identified 121 priority CDC projects that are not yet funded, many of which would add crucial child care capacity at installations with high demand and long waitlists. Despite these extraordinary needs, which would cost several billion dollars to remedy, over the past decade, a total of only eight Military Child Development Center projects were funded through annual appropriations bills. At this pace, the problem will keep getting worse faster than we can fix it.

Military CDCs ensure the health and safety of the children of servicemembers, enable military spouses to seek employment, and benefit all Americans by increasing the supply of child care and reducing pressure on private-sector child care providers in areas with large military installations. We know there's not enough capacity in the private system, so this investment will benefit all families—military and civilian.

I am grateful for your leadership in these trying times, and I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie Speier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

---

Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

CC: Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin