

Sample Phone Script for Calling Policymakers about Expanding Child Care WAGE\$ Program Statewide

This template is offered as a guide for calling [your own legislators](#) in the NC General Assembly and key members of the [Joint Conference Committee](#). Please edit this to personalize it, and feel free to use additional [talking points](#) in the Worthy Wages Campaign Toolkit. Remember, sharing your own personal story about how this is impacting you and your community is always the most effective way to communicate with policymakers.

A few tips:

- **Make it personal:** Why do you want legislators to support increased workforce compensation and expansion of the Child Care WAGE\$ Program?
- **Allow response time:** The person you are calling will likely be receiving many calls throughout the day.
- **Speak from experience:** Share your experience as a teacher, a child care provider, a parent, or a community member to make your call memorable. Have a conversation!
- **Include a call to action:** Make sure they know why you're calling and what you want them to do.

Items that are highlighted are where you should add in your own information and must be changed. You can also change any part of the script and say it in your own words. Regardless of the response you get, thank the legislator or staff for their time and for taking your call today.

Hi, my name is [NAME] and I live in [YOUR TOWN/COUNTY]. I'm calling to ask you to improve compensation for the early education workforce by expanding the Child Care WAGE\$ program statewide as proposed in the House budget. Child care teachers are the workforce behind the workforce and have been on the frontlines of the pandemic since day one. Yet they remain underpaid and undervalued for their important work to support young children, working families, and our state's economy. This is why North Carolina is facing an unprecedented child care workforce crisis right now.

[INSERT QUICK DETAIL ABOUT YOUR CONCERN FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A TEACHER, PROVIDER, PARENT, OR COMMUNITY MEMBER]

Making the Child Care WAGE\$ program available in all 100 counties will allow child care programs to attract and retain a qualified early childhood workforce and keep their programs operating without increasing parent fees. This investment is urgently needed to attract and retain a high-quality early childhood workforce, stabilize child care programs, and improve access to high-quality early learning opportunities for young children across the state. In the final state budget, please include the House budget proposal to expand the Child Care WAGE\$ program statewide and add new strategies to address the child care workforce crisis.

- [If negative reaction] I hope you reconsider. Your constituents need high-quality early learning opportunities, which is not possible without a qualified and compensated workforce. Without higher compensation and access to salary supplements through the Child Care WAGE\$ program, the teachers caring for North Carolina's future workers, innovators, and leaders simply can't afford to stay in the classroom any longer.
- [If positive reaction] Thank you for listening. I hope you'll continue pushing for increased compensation for the early childhood workforce through expansion of the Child Care WAGE\$ program in the final budget.

Sample Email to Policymakers about Expanding Child Care WAGE\$ Program Statewide

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Items that are highlighted are where you should add in your own information and must be changed.

Dear Rep. [INSERT NAME],

North Carolina is facing an unprecedented child care workforce crisis. As a [SAY WHO YOU ARE, WHERE YOU LIVE, AND/OR WHAT YOU DO], I know how important early educators are for young children's healthy development, working families, and our state's economy. The workforce crisis exists because child care teachers are paid such low wages and benefits for the critically important work they do. I urge you to improve compensation for the workforce now by expanding the Child Care WAGE\$ program statewide through \$35 million in funding as proposed in the House budget.

[INSERT STORY OR DETAILS ABOUT YOUR CONCERN]

For example:

- *I am an early childhood teacher but I can't support my family on my child care salary.*
- *I am a child care center director in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I have to turn away families on my waiting list because I can't find enough teachers, but I can't afford to pay higher wages.*
- *I am a parent of a toddler in [TOWN/COUNTY] and I can't find high-quality child care because the programs in my area can't find qualified teachers.*

In [YOUR TOWN/COUNTY/CHILD CARE PROGRAM], I am very concerned about [SAY WHAT MATTERS TO YOU AND WHAT YOU KNOW IS HAPPENING LOCALLY].

For example: not being able to support yourself on your early educator salary, how your program can't compete with other businesses that have the financial resources to pay more, how your child's program can't find qualified teachers, how the Child Care WAGE\$ Program isn't available in your county, etc.

The Child Care WAGE\$ program is an evidence-based, long-standing salary supplement program in North Carolina that supports child care teacher compensation, education, and retention. Making the Child Care WAGE\$ program available in all 100 counties will allow child care programs to attract and retain a qualified early childhood workforce and keep their programs operating without increasing parent fees.

Our state's future prosperity depends on working families, who depend on quality child care programs and teachers in order to work. Expanding Child Care WAGE\$ statewide will address child care teacher compensation, build back the early childhood workforce, and stabilize the child care industry. Please invest in our state's essential early childhood workforce and the young children they serve by supporting the expansion of Child Care WAGE\$ in the final state budget.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE/ORGANIZATION NAME]

[ADDRESS]