**Fairfax County FY2021 Budget Hearings April 2020**

**Suggested talking points for phone call or video testimony for child care advocates**

***testimony can be up to 3 minutes***

* Thank you for the chance to talk with you.
* (Introduce yourself briefly: your name, the name of your program or organization, and a little bit about your program such as the number of children and families you serve)
* **As you consider the revised FY21 county budget proposal, we urge your support for these recommendations from the County Manager:**
	+ The creation the new Fund 40045, Early Childhood Birth to 5. The fund will support a comprehensive approach to advancing and expanding the County’s early childhood system by providing full and equitable access to high quality, affordable, early care and education for young children. Though the new investments in the original FY21 proposal must be deferred, setting up the Fund is a crucial step and when revenues improve this is investment that must be a priority as we recover and rebuild.
	+ The $25 million referendum originally recommended in 2020 for early childhood facilities, which has been deferred to 2022. We are glad to see it is still here, even if delayed on the calendar. This will continue to be a crucial issue.
	+ Ensuring that no county employee’s pay or positions are cut.
* **As Fairfax decides how to use federal CARES Act funds and how to prioritize state and local funds to support our workforce and keep the community safe:**
	+ Essential workers serving on the front lines as child care providers need to be recognized and compensated for their work.
	+ Additional resources will be needed for testing in child care, personal protection equipment (PPE), and cleaning supplies for program sites.
* Child care is crucial to the county’s economy and infrastructure. We have to have child care programs, and we have to have people working in child care – in centers and family child care homes.
* This is about right now during the emergency, and this is also about the recovery and rebuilding.
* This is about child care so that parents can work – and this is about crucial child development and early learning experiences in our programs.
* (Idea: talk a little about your experience – whether you are open or closed, the reasons and your concerns at this time]
* (Idea: talk a little about what your program or organization would need in the recovery and future as an example.)
* Opening the Early Childhood Fund is an important start to forwarding the necessary investments, and investing emergency funds in the essential workforce in child care programs are urgent priorities for the health of our county overall.
* The Board of Supervisors has a crucial role to play. Thank you for your leadership.