

**Vote **NO** on Extreme Bill to Make Child Care  
More Expensive, Harder to Find**

Child care is not a luxury — it is a necessity for millions of American families. Yet in many communities, the cost rivals rent or mortgage payments, and in others, adequate supply simply does not exist. The consequences are real: our economy loses **an estimated \$122 billion annually** in earnings, productivity, and revenue due to child care shortages. This is not a failure of individual parents or providers. It is a policy failure.

H.R. 7726, the *Stop Child Care Scams Act*, does nothing to reduce child care costs, increase supply, or improve conditions for providers. Instead, it creates unnecessary uncertainty for the states and providers who administer our largest child care assistance program and adds bureaucratic burden without meaningful benefit. We all share a commitment to preventing fraud in government programs, but H.R. 7726 is not the solution. Here is what H.R. 7726 gets wrong:

**There is no evidence of widespread fraud in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program.** States already report error rates and undergo federal compliance reviews every three years. H.R. 7726 triples reporting obligations using accounting methods found in no other federal program, piling paperwork on a system that is already working.

**H.R. 7726 provides no new funding, even as the Office of Child Care has lost roughly half its oversight staff in the past year.** CCDBG dollars would be diverted from child care services to administrative overhead. Given limited administrative capacity, it is unclear whether implementing this bill is even feasible.

**H.R. 7726 can be used as a weapon for political persecution.** H.R. 7726 allows the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary to designate states as "high risk" and subject them to additional monitoring, without defining what "high risk" means or what that monitoring entails. Giving federal administrators undefined power without guardrails is not accountability. It is a blank check.

**H.R. 7726 mandates permanent debarment for any finding of fraud, with no room for mitigating circumstances.** However, it does not clarify whether a violation in one state triggers a nationwide ban or whether debarment applies to an individual or an entire franchise. This especially threatens small providers that operate with limited administrative capacity. In communities already facing child care shortages, permanently removing even one provider can leave families with no options at all.

**H.R. 7726 jeopardizes access to healthy food for hungry children.** H.R. 7726's punitive approach automatically bars providers from participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) if they are disbarred under CCDBG, and vice versa. As a result, providers could be permanently penalized in a completely separate program. The fear of losing CCDBG funding due to inadvertent or unintentional errors under CACFP could force providers to stop operating the program, threatening hungry children's access to healthy food.

**H.R. 7726 eliminates the flexibility that protects families.** Current law gives the HHS Secretary limited but important discretion to address unique circumstances, correct technical errors, and prevent enforcement from inadvertently harming families. H.R. 7726 eliminates that discretion entirely, forcing disqualification even for simple paperwork mistakes. Rigid mandates are not a substitute for administrative judgment.