

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2021

The Honorable David E. Price
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, and
Housing and Urban Development
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, and
Housing and Urban Development
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair David Price and Ranking Member Mario Diaz-Balart,

As you begin your critical work on the Fiscal Year 2022 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development appropriations bill, we strongly urge your inclusion of \$750,000 for the San José Public Library as a Community Project Funding project associated with the Economic Development Initiative account. This project would address inequities in access to quality childcare and school readiness. It would provide professional training and access to technology necessary for family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) caregivers to meet the needs of underserved children in San José. These funds would allow the San José Public Library to offer this essential programming citywide, including at the Alviso Branch located at 5050 N. 1st Street and at Bascom Branch located at 1000 S. Bascom Avenue.

This project builds on the crucial efforts of the San José Public Library to serve the most vulnerable children in our community by providing professional training for FFN caregivers of children under the age of six. The current FFN Caregiver Support Network has provided 60 FFN caregivers from San Jose access to high-quality workforce development training in child development, which increases and enhances quality of childcare environments, providing more equitable outcomes for families seeking care and those providing care. The funding would enable the existing successful pilot program to continue and allow for expanded digital inclusion and technology support for caregivers to access virtual programming and additional resources to enhance the care they provide.

Many families, especially those in underserved communities, rely on FFN caregivers when they can't afford to enroll their children in licensed childcare programs. By providing FFN caregivers with free, high-quality professional training, this project ensures the children in their care receive the support they need to be school-ready by the time they enter kindergarten. The funds will also be used to close the digital divide by providing caregivers with access to technology.

The project directly benefits marginalized communities, providing care in areas of San José which have an over representation of low-income households and have been deemed "high risk zones" by First 5 Santa Clara County, with demonstrated needs in the areas of low maternal educational achievement, high Medi-Cal enrollment, and higher incidences of child abuse and teen pregnancy.

As an indication of local support, we've enclosed the following 21 letters of support from community leaders:

- The Honorable Susan Ellenberg, Santa Clara County Supervisor, District 4
- Dr. Mary Ann Dewan, County Superintendent of Schools, Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Dr. Dawn Coppin, Executive Director, San José Public Library Foundation
- Dr. Dianna J. Ballesteros, Director of Early Learning, Alum Rock Union Elementary School District
- Ms. Martha Gabaray, Program Manager, Healthier Kids Foundation
- Mr. Frederick J. Ferrer, CEO, Child Advocates of Silicon Valley
- Mr. Albert Nguyen, Program and IT Manager, International Children Assistance Network
- Mr. Chase Davenport, Senior Director, Education, Resource Area for Teaching
- Mr. Eric A. Welker, Director of Educational Content, Resource Area for Teaching
- Ms. Dennis King, Executive Director, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley
- Ms. Sara Reyes, Senior Division Director, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
- Mr. Daniel Peck, President, Mission College
- Ms. Alma Burrell, Associate Director, Roots Community Health Center
- Mr. Saldy Suriben, Chief Marketing Officer, Silicon Valley Pride
- Ms. Camille Llanes-Fontanilla, Executive Director, SOMOS Mayfair
- Ms. Mayola Rodriguez, Integrated Services Director, Go Kids Inc.
- Ms. Alejandra Bologna Zubikarai, Mexican Consul General in San Jose
- Mr. Milan R. Balinton, Executive Director, African American Community Service Agency
- Ms. Amy Kaiser, Regional Coordinator, Program for Infant Toddler Care Regional Support Network
- Ms. Dianne Thompson, Director, Family Child Care at its Best
- Ms. Dayna Chung, Executive Director, Community Equity Collaborative

If enacted, this request would help to realize our country's promise of equal opportunity for all by providing vulnerable children with high-quality childcare that will benefit them throughout their lives, and providing high-quality training that can offer greater economic mobility options to childcare providers in low-income communities. We wholeheartedly support this Community Project Funding request and ask that you do so as well.

Sincerely,



Anna G. Eshoo



Ro Khanna

Enclosures