

[SB21-236 Increase Capacity Early Childhood Care & Education](#)

Thursday, April 22, 2021

Senate Education

Kelly Brough, President & CEO, Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

Support Testimony

Thank you, Madame Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide this written testimony today. My name is Kelly Brough and I am the President and CEO of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. I am here today on behalf of the Chamber, our 3,000 members and their 400,000 employees, to express our support of Senate Bill 236.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted what we've long known: that quality child care is essential for a successful economy. Indeed, this past year has reinforced how critical child care is to our workforce.

Throughout this challenging time, our child care providers have worked diligently to remain open and do so safely so that parents and caretakers of all professional backgrounds can work. Even so, many parents were forced to drop out of the workforce during the pandemic because of the lack of accessible, affordable child care. Additionally, Prosper CO, a Chamber affiliate, identified through its research that the high cost of child care is a major barrier that's preventing Coloradans, particularly people of color and women, from advancing their career and economic opportunities.

And even before the pandemic, employers expressed the desire to provide nearby or on-site affordable child care to their employees as an additional benefit. This bill will aid employers in these efforts.

This bill will provide critical financial support, as well as support for early childhood educators, which will help increase capacity for early childhood care, something that is vital to so many Coloradans.

Honestly, what our employers appreciate most about this bill is it

approaches the child care challenge like a high performing team would – committing to address this critical issue by working together and encouraging solutions.

We urge you to vote yes on Senate Bill 236.