



May 04, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
Chairman  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders and Ranking Member Cassidy:

AccessLex Institute® is pleased to offer its support for S. 1354, the *Child Care for Working Families Act*. Introduced on April 27, 2023 by Senators Patty Murray (D-WA), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Bob Casey (D-PA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and 33 other Senators, the *Child Care for Working Families Act* would ensure that working families earning less than 150 percent of their state's median income pay no more than seven percent of their income on child care while also improving its quality and access.

AccessLex Institute, in partnership with its nearly 200 nonprofit and state-affiliated ABA-approved member law schools, has been committed to improving access to legal education and to maximizing the affordability and value of a law degree since 1983. The AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence® advocates for policies that make legal education work better for students and society alike and conducts research on the most critical issues facing legal education today.

According to a recommendation by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, families should not spend more than seven percent of their income on child care costs. However, the average single parent spends nearly 37 percent of their household income on child care for one child and married couples pay almost 11 percent. What's worse is that the cost of child care has increased 25 percent in the past decade, with infant care costs now exceeding the average cost of in-state tuition at public four-year colleges in 29 states and the District of Columbia.

This financial burden does not just fall on parents in the workforce: 24 percent of undergraduates and 32 percent of graduate students are parents. For student-parents, many of whom have limited access to affordable on-campus child care, the high cost can lead them to devote less time to their studies or even drop out. Making child care more affordable could help increase completion and lead to greater academic success. As the postsecondary student population changes, the support provided to today's students must change to meet their evolving needs. AccessLex Institute supports the *Child Care for*

*Working Families Act* because it would provide critical financial support to low-income families both in the workforce and pursuing higher education.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [cchapman@accesslex.org](mailto:cchapman@accesslex.org) or Nancy Conneely, Managing Director of Policy, at [nconneely@accesslex.org](mailto:nconneely@accesslex.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris S", written on a light gray rectangular background.

Christopher P. Chapman  
President and Chief Executive Officer