



October 6, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington DC, 20201

Re: Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs (RIN: 0970-AD30) - OPPOSE

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

UNITE-LA and the undersigned business organizations appreciate the opportunity to submit comments to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the proposed rule, *Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs* (RIN: 0970-AD30). As business and workforce development entities committed to advancing economic mobility, we can attest to the anticipated negative consequences that this proposed ruling would have on employers and the current workforce, our long-term education-to-workforce pipeline, and economy. Therefore, we respectfully urge HHS to withdraw the proposed rule change.

For more than 60 years, Head Start has provided multigenerational infrastructure through free, high-quality early learning and health services for eligible families, ensuring a dedicated workforce for business and an investment in our future workforce pipeline. With Head Start we all benefit; families receive access to the immediate benefit of a safe and quality care for their children, employers receive a stable and reliable workforce, and children receive a high-quality early learning experience that has been shown to break generational cycles of poverty. Employers cannot maintain a stable workforce when working parents lack reliable child care. Insufficient access to affordable child care costs the nation an estimated [\\$172 billion annually](#) in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue, resulting in a critical economic competitiveness challenge. A portion of this loss ([\\$70 billion annually](#)) can be linked to disruptions in child care that lead to employee absenteeism, turnover, and reduced workforce participation for the nation's most foundational workers, which include the education, health care, hospitality, manufacturing, and retail sectors. Based on [federal occupational wage data](#), these sectors are more likely to have [income-eligible](#) workers whose children are [enrolled in Head Start](#).

If codified, the proposed rule changes would eliminate the majority of the program's quality and service standards, thereby putting at risk Head Start's [short-](#) and [long-term](#) economic benefits to its graduates and their parents. Weakening these standards will undermine the reliability and quality of a program that working families and their employers depend on. We are also strongly concerned with the proposed rule to enforce English-only instruction. Based on recent economic studies, in today's competitive global market, proficiency in more than one language is an [economic asset](#). In California alone, job postings with desired bilingual qualifications nearly [quadrupled](#) in the last decade.

Preserving high-quality ECE programs, such as Head Start, will only advance our country's educational achievement and economic success, making it a priority for bolstering workforce participation, talent development, and economic competitiveness. Decades of research have shown that investments into Head Start pay back in dividends, with every [\\$1 investment into the program America sees a \\$7-9 return](#). UNITE-LA and its business partners strongly urge you to withdraw this proposed rule. UNITE-LA's Director of Education and Workforce Strategy & Policy, Kelly Reynolds, stands ready to answer any questions and can be reached at kreynolds@unitela.com.

Sincerely,



Sonia Campos-Rivera
Senior Vice President, Education Policy and Public Affairs
UNITE-LA

Bay Area Council
Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce
CalAsian Chamber of Commerce
California African American Chamber of Commerce
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce
California Multicultural Business Alliance
Central City Association
Chargie
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County
Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce
East Bay Economic Development Alliance

East Bay Leadership Council
El Sereno Chamber of Commerce
Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce
Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber
High Desert Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Hispanic Chambers of Commerce of San Francisco
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Hospital Association of Southern California
Latin American & Caribbean Business Chamber of Commerce

**Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Business Council
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Los Angeles LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce
Microenterprise Collaborative of Inland Southern California
Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
National Association of Women Business Owners-LA
National Hispanic Construction Alliance
North Bay Leadership Council
Oakland Chamber of Commerce
PNC Financial Services Group, Inc
Regional Chamber of Commerce San Gabriel Valley**

**San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
San Francisco Filipino-American Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance
Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce
Santa Rosa Metro Chamber of Commerce
Sierra Business Council
Small Business Majority
Southern CA Healthcare Advocacy Coalition
TechNet
Valley Industry & Commerce Association
Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation
Vietnamese American Chamber of Commerce**