**Your Name**

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4th September 2023

**[Hon] MP’s name**

Portfolio

Freepost Parliament

Private Bag 18 888

Parliament Buildings

Wellington 6160

Dear Minister

I recently attended an online webinar run by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) about the way early childhood care and education is structured in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I was shocked to learn we have the highest rate of state funding per capita in the OECD but that the cost to parents is the least affordable. I also learnt that around $1.3 billion of state funding goes into the sector every year but the four biggest private operators get around $450 million of that.

We also heard about a nurse whose daycare closed down and she tried 8 others but there were no spaces for her preschooler so she had to fly her parents over from Samoa to care for her child. This shows how hard parents are doing it in the current system.

As you will be aware evidence shows us that good quality early childhood care and education can have a positive impact on a child’s life, but poor quality ECCE can have a very bad impact. This vital sector is too important to be left to the market. It’s a public good and needs to be treated like one.

In the webinar we heard how well the sector is structured in Denmark and in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Kiwi kids and parents deserve that here. We can redesign systems in Aotearoa to make sure all families thrive. This should be addressed as an urgent priority for any party who comes into power after October 14. I’d like to hear how you plan to do this.

Yours faithfully,

**Your Name**