

**THE WHITE HOUSE**

WASHINGTON

August 17, 2022

State Leaders,

When we launched *Joining Forces*, our White House initiative to support military and veteran families, caregivers, and survivors, we started by bringing together the people who understood these issues best—our military families—to listen to and learn from them. Again and again, I've heard from military spouses that access to high quality, affordable child care is challenging. It makes it hard for spouses to build their careers, and it causes them concern for their children's safety and development. There can be extensive waiting lists for child care on bases and a lack of accredited child care providers available off-installation. We know that quality child care is critical for military children's well-being, their parents' peace of mind, and—ultimately—mission readiness.

That is why I'm excited that the Department of Defense is expanding the Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood Plus (MCCYN-PLUS) program, even as it also continues to expand on base child care opportunities. Providers in MCCYN-PLUS will need to meet DoD requirements, such as a certain quality level in their State's Quality Rating and Improvement System, a system that establishes quality standards of care for children and a commitment to work toward even higher levels of quality care.

I urge you to connect with your State child care agencies to encourage them to participate in MCCYN-PLUS. While this program will increase opportunities for military families, it will also increase the quality care and education for all children and families and bring additional income to businesses in your states.

I am excited about MCCYN-PLUS as it is a true partnership between the Department of Defense and State-level agencies that promotes the readiness and resilience of our military families. MCCYN-PLUS is just one way that the Department is honoring its commitment to its people—the most valuable part of our national defense.

Join us in honoring the commitment and sacrifice of our military families, and help us ensure they have what they need to thrive.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Biden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.