



March 21, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper
North Carolina Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Governor Cooper,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of private, community-based licensed child care owners and operators in our State, our employees and the families we serve. NCLCCA urges you to officially define licensed child care businesses and their employees as “essential” *before* you issue either a “shelter in place” order or other restrictions to interrupt the spread of COVID-19 here at home. We strongly believe that if an “essential” definition for licensed child care centers is not made clear before such orders are issued, there will be chaos not only among the business which comprise the child care industry, but also the families who depend upon us as we try to move forward together to weather this crisis.

Many centers are working so hard to remain open in the face of plummeting enrollment and high absenteeism in order to continue to serve children of parents and caregivers who must keep working, including essential healthcare workers, bank and post office employees, retail pharmacy and grocery store workers, etc. They need to hear loud and clear that their long hours and the risks they and their employees are taking are not for naught. They need to understand – now – that they are officially “essential,” too.

We understand that several states that have already issued shelter in place orders, such as California and Pennsylvania, have exempted child care centers from these orders among their list of essential businesses and we respectfully ask you to do the same for the centers and early childhood educators who wish to continue working to serve children. These are indeed uncertain times; yet, we know that businesses need certainty and predictability more than almost anything. Please help provide that to our child care industry to the extent that you are able – and still keep North Carolinians safe, mitigate the spread of this virus, and “flatten the curve” to sustain and support our health care industry.

In closing, we must share that we sincerely appreciate all that Dr. Kristi Snuggs and the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) have done, thus far, to help licensed child care providers deal with this crisis. Under her leadership, the Division has been a valuable partner to us and her responsiveness to our needs and requests has been outstanding. Thank you for giving this request your attention and consideration. Please let us hear from you soon. We’re all in this together.

Respectfully yours,

Kevin Campbell, President

We work to ensure a successful future for young children and their families
by working to ensure the success of those who provide licensed early care and education.