

**North Carolina Early Education Coalition**

*DEDICATED TO ADVANCING HIGH QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION*



# How to be an Effective Advocate for Young Children and How to Work with State Legislators

April 14, 2020



**NORTH CAROLINA  
EARLY EDUCATION COALITION**

The NC Early Education Coalition is a proud partner in the national ZERO TO THREE Think Babies™ campaign and in the Pritzker Children's Initiative's National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers.

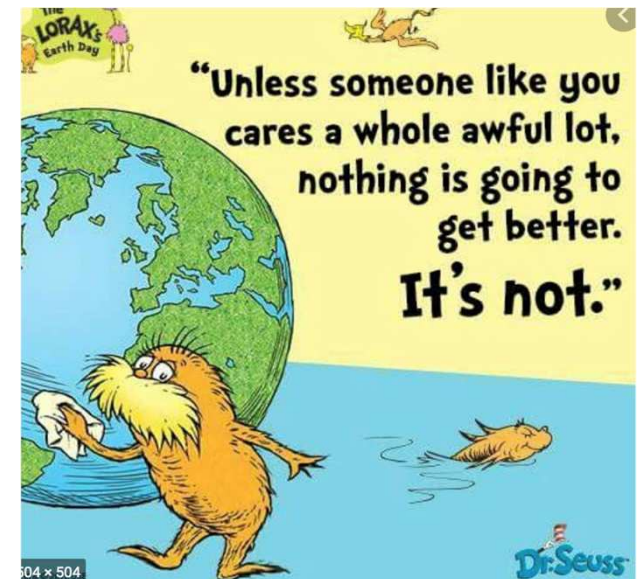
# Message of Hope from Elliott



“There’s a light  
at the end of  
the tunnel!”

# Goals for Today

- Updates on COVID-19 policy action
- Focus on the 2020 Short Session with special guest Scott Laster, the Coalition's lobbyist
- Effective advocacy tips and strategies

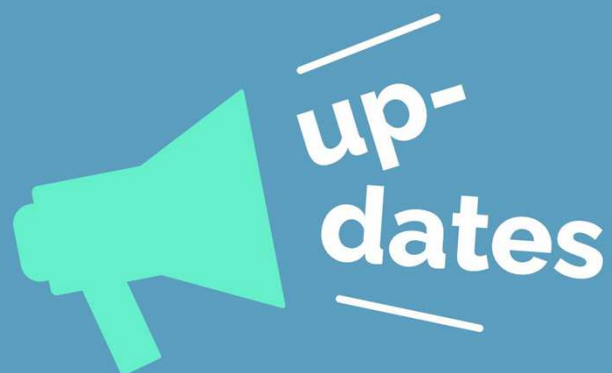


Let's Connect on Chat!

**What is one thing you want legislators to do to address the situation facing child care programs in your community during the COVID-19 crisis?**

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## COVID-19 Child Care Updates

# Thank You!

## Thank you for Taking Action!

- Over **1,000** petition signers
- Over **500** people used the Action Center – sending **12,000** emails to legislators!
- **House Health Working Group** had child care presentation by Donna White, NC Partnership for Children (see handout)



# NC Early Education Coalition Action

## **New Fact Sheet: Child Care Emergency Economic Support Proposal - \$125 Million Ask**

- **Emergency Child Care Assistance funding proposal to support early childhood education system now, during and after the crisis.**
  - Programs that are open to serve essential workers
  - Programs that are closed and in danger of remaining closed
- **New fact sheet and petition stories on our website**

## **Breaking News! Releasing V3 to legislators with priority asks and increased \$**

- Health and sanitation supplies, equipment and cleaning services
- Increased bonus pay for early childhood teachers and staff
- Parent copayments waived and paid by the state
- Lost revenue grant program for child care programs

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## NC General Assembly Short Session Overview



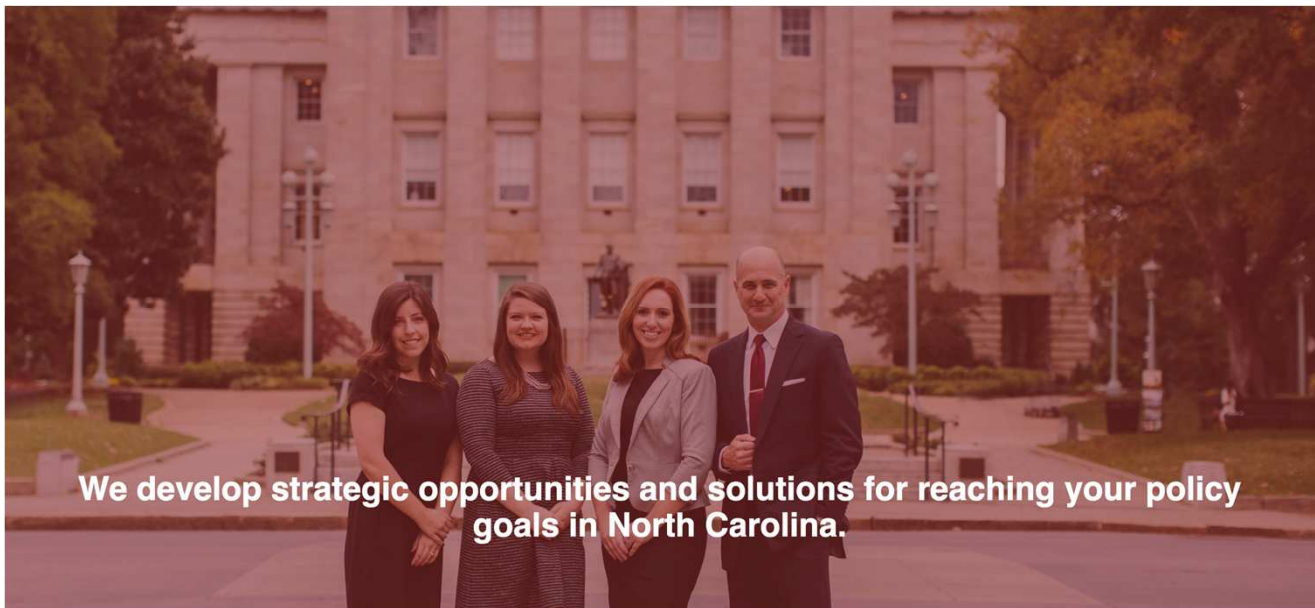
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# Special Guest – Coalition Lobbying Team

## Scott Laster, Kairos Government Affairs



# Short Session Overview

## Focus on COVID-19 related issues

- **Schedule:**
  - House Workgroups are meeting now virtually
  - Senate HHS also working, but not public process
  - Preparing plans and budgets
  - Very short in-person Session – April 28-30
- Requests – likely to outstrip state funding
- Looking for all federal funding available for COVID-19 response
- “Competition” for relief funding will be huge – every sector affected



## Future:

- Delay new state budget until July or August
- Projecting a recession and anticipated revenue loss - \$1.5 to \$2.5 billion

# Tips for Working with State Policymakers Now

## Focus on House Health Working Group & Senate HHS Appropriations

### NCGA COVID-19

- House Speaker Moore created House Select Committee on COVID-19
  - Taking comments at – <https://www.ncleg.gov/RequestForComments/33>
  - Listen in <https://www.ncleg.gov/LegislativeCalendar/>
- Senate side – collecting information via Sen. Berger and Sen. Blue
  - <https://medium.com/@bergerpress/joint-statement-from-sens-berger-and-blue-on-covid-19-efforts-dc14ecc43e3c>

## Communications

- Direct calls and emails to your own legislator
- Media outreach –
  - Letter to the editor
  - Social media

# Key Legislators

## House Health Workgroup

- Rep. Josh Dobson, Chair
- Rep. Donny Lambeth, Chair
- Rep. Perrin Jones, Chair
- Rep. Donna White, Chair
- Rep. Carla Cunningham, Chair
- Rep. Becky Carney, Chair
- Rep. Gale Adcock
- Rep. Kristin Baker
- Rep. Mary Belk
- Rep. Jean Farmer-Butterfield
- Rep. Verla Insko
- Rep. Garland Pierce
- Rep. Larry Potts
- Rep. Wayne Sasser
- Rep. Larry Yarborough
- Rep. Lee Zachary

## Senate HHS Appropriations

- Sen. Joyce Krawiec, chair
- Sen. Rob Bryan
- Sen Jim Burgin
- Sen. Ralph Hise
- Sen. Paul Lowe
- Sen. Jim Perry
- Sen. Gladys Robinson
- Sen Terry VanDuyn

# Questions with Scott?



# North Carolina Early Education Coalition

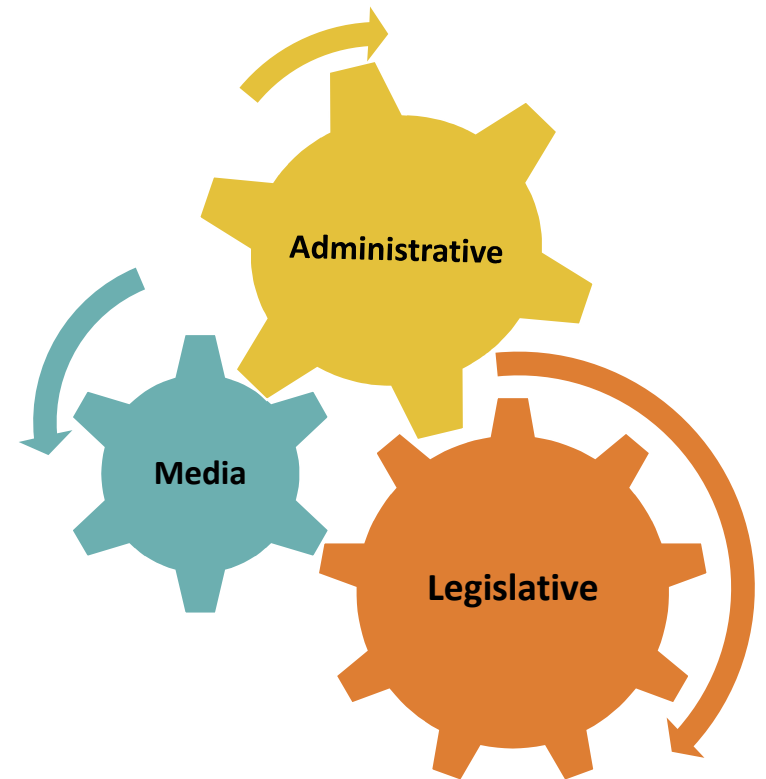
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## Effective Advocacy Tips

# Types of Advocacy

- **Administrative Advocacy** – change policy, rules or regulations at state agency level.
- **Media Advocacy** – create public awareness and support around key issues.
- **Legislative Advocacy** – motivate federal or state policymakers to enact laws and budgets to support children and families.



# Advocacy vs. Lobbying

## Advocacy

- **Building support for an issue**
  - Education
  - Sharing illustrative stories
  - Working on a solution to a problem.
- Individual citizens can always contact their elected officials as constituents.
- State and federal governments do not regulate public at large.

***KEEP IT PERSONAL!***

***Use your personal email and telephone***

## Lobbying

### Two kinds of lobbying – Direct & Grassroots

Involves communicating with elected officials to influence their actions.

- Nonprofits can lobby – but there are restrictions on time and resources.
- Lobbyists must register. Groups can hire lobbyists.
- State and federal government may regulate lobbying activities.
- **Grassroots Lobbying**
  - Communication with the public that refers to specific legislation
  - Reflects a view of the legislation, and
  - Contains a call to action
- **Call to action**
  - Asking the public to contact legislators or staff
  - Providing contact information & providing the means





# Legislative Advocacy – What Persuades Legislators?

Urgent Need

Accurate  
Facts

Compelling  
Real Stories

Effective  
Solutions

Messages &  
Messengers

Other  
Policymakers

Local  
Support

Media  
Coverage

Legal  
Requirement

# Communicating with Policymakers

## General Tips

- Build a relationship
- Issues that affect their constituents
- Facts and data
- Share stories
- Easily understood and communicated



# Build Relationships

- **Virtually Now**
  - Visit their website, Facebook page, Twitter
- **Meet and greet at events, and invite to your program**

Find out who represents you in the  
NC General Assembly

Visit [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net)

**Having a relationship  
with a legislator is the  
most important thing you  
need to do to make  
change happen!!**

# Advocacy Messages

**Effective Advocacy Messages are –**

- **Simple**
- **Short**
- **Compelling**
- **Call for Action**



# Different Forms of Communication

- Phone calls and online actions
- Traditional media
- Online media
- Social media



**Develop  
your  
message**

**Identify  
your  
messenger**

**Share your  
story!**

# Media Advocacy

## Traditional Media

- Letters to the editor
- Op-eds
- Quotes and interviews

## Social Media

- Public form of communication
- Twitter
  - Use hashtags
  - Tag legislators
- Facebook
  - Share messages with your network
  - Post on legislator's page
  - Beware of comment sections

# Telling Your Story



**“I feel like I’m at war right now, like I’m on the battlefield.**

*Every day you’re hoping you don’t have a teacher who gets it, praying that you don’t get it, that none of the children have it, and that the parents understand all the new guidelines. I want to stand up and help my state and essential workers, but on the other hand, what is the incentive for me to continue to risk my life and my staff’s life everyday?”*

Child Care Center Owner,  
Garner and Clayton, NC



“

We have been open and serving our community for 23 years. We have so many parents out of work. I am afraid we will not survive and have to shut our doors forever. I do not want to lose my staff, most of them have been with us for 10-15 years.

”

CHILD CARE CENTER OWNER  
DUNN, NC



“

**“WE NEED HELP IN ORDER FOR OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO CONTINUE WORKING AND OUR CHILD CARE WORKERS TO BE PROTECTED. WE CANNOT WEATHER THIS STORM WITHOUT FINANCIAL SUPPORT.”**

CHILD CARE CENTER DIRECTOR  
DURHAM, NC

”

# Your Turn!

## Write your own message!

No more than 3 sentences or short phrases.

- How is COVID-19 affecting your child care program/teachers/parents
- Pick one compelling fact
- Add a comment about why this matters
- Ask a policymaker to take action





# Things to do right now

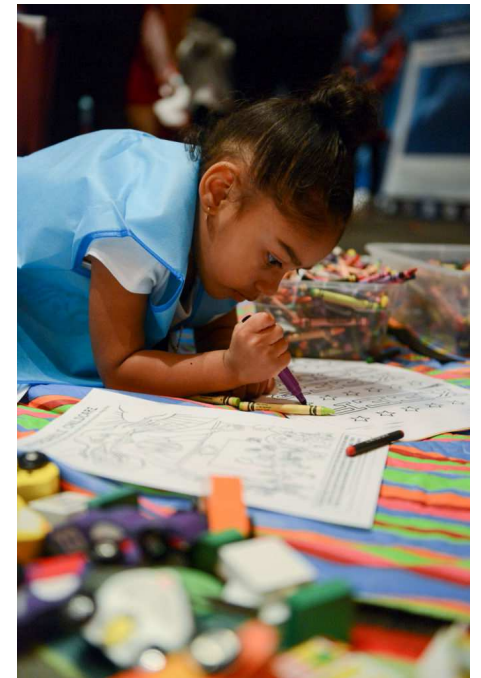
- **Take Action**

- Send a message via calls or email to your own legislator to support emergency child care funding

- **Share Your Story with us!**

- Share how this is impacting you, your family, or families you serve

<https://www.ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/coronavirus/>



# Questions?



# Thank you!

[www.NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org](http://www.NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org)

**For more information:**

**Michele Rivest**

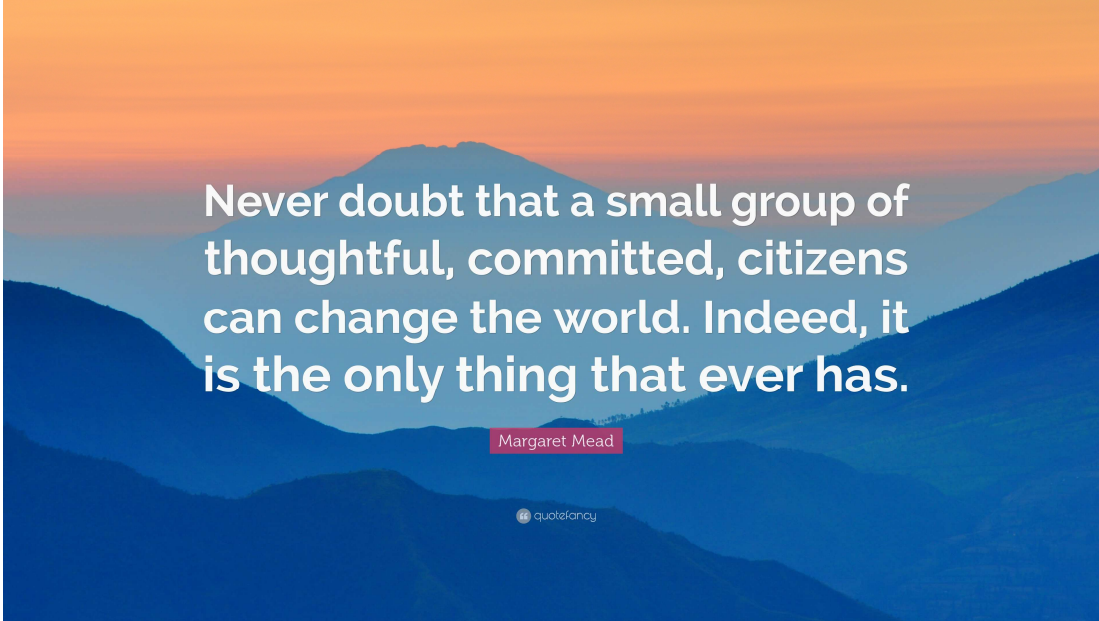
[michele.rivest@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org](mailto:michele.rivest@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org)

**Elaine Zukerman**

[elainez@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org](mailto:elainez@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org)

**Angela Burch**

[Angelab@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org](mailto:Angelab@NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org)



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

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