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BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION IS URGED BY OVER 200 SCHOLARS TO ACT ON ITS CARE AGENDA

March 5, 2021. A letter sent to President Biden and Vice-President Harris urged the administration to take action on the far-reaching care agenda outlined during Biden's presidential campaign. The letter was crafted and signed by over 200 members and affiliates of the Carework Network, an international group of researchers, policy experts and advocates with expertise in care work and caregiving.

"Building Back Better", the administration's recovery plan for working families, will require investing in a robust care infrastructure to provide meaningful supports to parents, informal / unpaid family caregivers of older adults and those with disabilities, as well as to develop the paid care sector (including K-12 schools, child care, health care, and care for older adults and those with disabilities).

The letter to the administration offered three key policy recommendations for making care and caregiving central to the national agenda: 1) universal paid leave for anyone with caring responsibilities and anyone who requires care; 2) supporting and protecting care workers; and 3) recognition of child care and schools as universal care centers. By implementing these recommendations, the organization believes that the Biden-Harris Administration will provide the necessary building blocks for creating the recommended robust care infrastructure for the future.

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Although the care crisis was not created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency has thrust the entire care landscape into the spotlight. Some important considerations:

- The United States is the only industrialized country in the world that does not provide federally mandated paid family and medical leave to workers. Nor does the US have a federal paid sick leave policy.
- Forty-two percent of COVID-19 deaths in the US were in congregant care settings, highlighting the vulnerability of older adults and others with high care needs.
- Schools are places of universal caregiving and do much more than the monumental task of educating our nation's children. In many cases, they provide mental health care, free/low-cost meals, and essential early care and education as well as after-school care so that parents are able to work.

“This is a galvanizing moment for the care movement and for care policy,” said Mignon Duffy, co-chair of the Carework Network. “Longtime scholars and activists have recognized this moment, and are expressing strong support for policy innovations such as paid family and medical leave, increasing pay and protections for low-wage care workers, and developing a strong system of wrap-around child care and education.”

The full letter can be downloaded from the Carework Network website at

<http://careworknetworkresponds.com/>

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ABOUT THE CAREWORK NETWORK

The Carework Network is an international organization of researchers, policymakers, and advocates involved in various domains of care work. Based in the social sciences, individuals from all academic disciplines and advocacy organizations who take various approaches to the study of care work and care work policy are invited to participate in the Carework Network.

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