

Crapo Statement at Hearing on Child Care

July 9, 2024

Washington, D.C.—U.S. Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) delivered the following remarks at a hearing entitled “Examining the State of Child Care: How Federal Policy Solutions Can Support Families, Close Existing Gaps, and Strengthen Economic Growth.”

As prepared for delivery:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

“Many Americans rely on some form of child care, which not only allows parents to remain in the workforce, but also provides children with critical social and educational development opportunities.

“Unfortunately, for some families, child care is either unaffordable or unavailable.

“Recognizing that child care is an essential component to a thriving economy, in 1996, I joined a bipartisan, bicameral group of colleagues in creating the Child Care Entitlement to States (CCES) as part of welfare reform.

“The law’s targeted financial resources are available to assist working, low-income families in paying for child care.

“The program recognizes that states are best equipped to design and deliver benefits, and that parents should be empowered to make decisions for their children.

“One of the core features of the CCES is its reliance on vouchers, which allow families to choose the child care arrangement that best suits their needs.

“Families may use these vouchers for a wide variety of options, from child care centers and in-home care to after-school care and faith-based organizations.

“Eligible families may be required to share in the cost of child care when able and appropriate, ensuring funds are wisely scaled to meet financial needs.

“As Congress considers opportunities to increase access to child care, we must carefully evaluate existing programs to understand what works and why gaps persist.

“Federal government mandates on child care provider wages or approved sites of service are not the answer. In fact, spending billions of hardworking taxpayer dollars on these approaches would likely only exacerbate costs, placing child care options even further out of reach for families.

“Today, we will hear from witnesses who will highlight how states can leverage existing programmatic flexibilities to bolster access to services and allow families to drive the child care market.

“I look forward to today’s discussion.”