



CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE RESPONSES TO IOWA HELPING COMMUNITY POLICY GROUP SURVEY

Context. Covid-19 raised much greater attention to the role that essential workers – particularly in helping, caregiving, and education roles – play in society and the need to value and support them. These include doctors and nurses and classroom teachers – but they also include frontline direct care, community health, and child care workers.

These workers are vital to Iowa and the nation’s well-being and the people they serve. They represent a workforce behind the workforce, supporting workers and their productivity. They also themselves are part of the workforce and economy. When well-resourced and supported, these workers can build careers that enable them to raise their own families and contribute to the economy. Currently, despite the essential nature of the work these direct care, community health, and child care workers do, they are under-resourced and among the lowest paid of workers in society.

Among other actions, the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act took first steps in providing major new federal investments in direct care workers, child care workers, and community health workers. The Iowa Helping Community Policy Group advocates for making major increased investments in these workforces a permanent part of the federal budget. We are asking all candidates for Congress to respond to the following questions. Following are the unedited responses received from Congressional candidates as of August 18, 2022.

| OFFICE | CANDIDATE | QUESTION 1 | QUESTION 2 | QUESTION 3 |
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| | | Do you support making increased investments in | Do you support making enhanced federal | Do you support investing additional federal funds for |

| | | child care initiated in COVID-19 legislation (approximately \$40 billion annually) as a permanent part of the federal budget? | investments in direct care workers through Medicaid home and community-based services (approximately \$20 billion annually) as a permanent part of the federal budget? | community health workers (approximately \$5 billion annually) within public health as a permanent part of the federal budget? |
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| U.S. Senate | Mike Franken | YES. I foresee that \$40B investment will be repaid many times over with increased productivity and better early childhood education. | YES. | YES. Public health is smart business and a quality of life must. |
| U.S. Senate | Chuck Grassley | <p>I understand that many families have trouble affording child care, and that child care centers are struggling to pay staff and keep up with inflation. Child care is essential to making sure that parents can work and kids have a safe and enriching environment.</p> <p>I am an original cosponsor of legislation that would enhance the existing Child Care Development Block Grant to expand eligibility to more families, and allow states to make investments in education and training of staff and increasing capacity by expanding or building new facilities. This bill would also</p> | <p>I'm a longtime supporter of improving the lives of people with disabilities including children with disabilities and their families. I believe people with disabilities should have more choices and flexibility in how they receive care especially with greater home- and community-based care options. This work includes increased federal investments in our health care workforce, including direct care workers.</p> <p>Beginning in the 1980s, I worked on Katie Beckett waivers that expanded treatment at home for children with disabilities while still allowing them to be covered by Medicaid. ...</p> | <p>First, I want to thank all health care professionals who have dedicated their lives to serving patients and the community. You are vital to the health and wellbeing of our communities. The work and sacrifices you've taken throughout the COVID-19 pandemic exemplifies the definition of a hero.</p> <p>I support increased federal investments in the health care workforce, improving the workforce pipeline, and expanding payment and access to health care workers under Medicare.</p> <p>As Finance Committee chairman, I fought to give our frontline health care workers the tools and</p> |

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| | | improve reimbursement rates for providers. | * Additional responses from Chuck Grassley at end of table. | resources they needed throughout the pandemic. ... ** Additional responses at end of table. |
| House District No. 2 | Ashley Hinson | OTHER - I believe we must prioritize policies that make child care more affordable and accessible across the country, including through federal support where appropriate. Child care investments should be considered through the annual appropriations process, where Congress can exercise important oversight to ensure taxpayer money is being spent responsibly and in the most effective way possible. Child care investments must also be made through the lens of long-term success for a rebounding workforce, not through pandemic-era policies. | OTHER - Home and community-based care services are critical components of our health care system, and provide improved quality of life, lower costs to patients and taxpayers, and better health outcomes. These services should be supported through the Medicaid system, but enhanced investments must be offset accordingly to ensure taxpayers are not straddled with more debt that will only worsen inflation. We should also work to improve access to these home and community-based care services in rural communities, where care is often limited or unavailable. | OTHER - Community health workers play an important role in protecting and improving our nation's public health, but these investments should be considered through the annual appropriations process. This will ensure Congress can exercise its critical oversight function to safeguard taxpayer dollars and ensure funds are being spent responsibly and efficiently. This is important now more than ever as government overspending contributes to inflation. |
| House District No. 4 | Ryan Melton | YES. | YES. | YES. |

*** Additional responses from Chuck Grassley on question 2 –**

In the early 2000s, I worked with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) to pass the bipartisan Family Opportunity Act. The law encourages parents to work and get ahead without sacrificing health coverage for their children with special needs. It also allows parents to buy Medicaid coverage without impoverishing their families,

and it established Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (F2F) that provide first-hand knowledge for families with children who have complex medical conditions.

As Finance Committee chairman, I helped reauthorize the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program in Medicaid, which helps states provide transition services to people moving from nursing facilities to home or community-based settings. I have also conducted extensive oversight of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to ensure seniors and people with disabilities on Medicaid are receiving improved access to high-quality services. I've also worked with Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) to pass the Advancing Care for Exceptional (ACE) Kids Act that enables children with medically complex conditions to choose to enroll in a health home. Our most vulnerable kids and their families deserve a health care system that coordinates care and produces healthier outcomes. Kids with complex medical conditions face myriad challenges including an uncoordinated and burdensome health care system. I'm working to ensure CMS implements this program timely and follows congressional intent.

I'm also working with Senator Bennet to advance the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act that provides states the ability to streamline the screening and enrollment process for out-of-state pediatric care providers who serve kids with complex medical conditions. I'm committed to improving the lives of people with disabilities by expanding home- and community-based care options. This includes increased investments in our health care workforce.

**** Additional responses from Chuck Grassley on question 3 –**

I was heavily involved in negotiations to pass the five bipartisan COVID-19 packages that provided more than \$178 billion in direct relief to health care providers and billions to support public health preparedness and public health infrastructure. I also helped add 1,000 Graduate Medical Education (GME) residency slots. These GME slots are prioritized for rural and underserved communities.

Most recently, I supported the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 that provides \$1.3 billion to support federally funded health care workforce programs. These programs provide grants and loans to our future health care workforce. It also provides the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) \$8.5 billion with specific funding to support public health infrastructure.

I'm also a cosponsor of legislation to increase access to health care workers under Medicare for services they are licensed and trained to perform. This includes expanding access to pharmacists, mental health counselors, audiologists, and physical therapists.