**Invite to reps to attend (school board, local village/city councils/board, county boards, and state reps)**

 (insert name of group or organization that is putting on the event) would like you to attend a rally to support Child Care Counts at the (insert location) on (Day, date,) at (insert time). We will be talking about how crucial the continuation of the Child Care Counts program is to continue stabilizing tuition for parents while increasing wages to recruit and retain highly qualified educators in child care. Prior to Child Care Counts, the average wage was $10.66 an hour for group centers, and child care programs were closing at an alarming rate, in 2007 there were 7,196 family child care businesses. Today there are 2,005 family child care businesses. A loss of 5,477 child care businesses (72% reduction) in those intervening years. This data shows that the loss of child care wasn’t due to covid. It was already a decades long problem. However, covid allowed federal funds to be allocated to actually implement the Joint Finance Committee rejected Child Care Strong 2021-2023 budget proposal to be “piloted” and reproposed in the 2023-2025 budget utilizing state funds to replace the expiring federal funds with the data to support continuation. Wages are now $12.66 an hour and the loss of child care programs has stabilized without significantly increasing tuition rates for parents-even in the face of extreme inflationary pressure that drove up the costs of the basic supplies required to maintain quality environments for the children. We look forward to seeing you there, but if you are unable to make it work we look forward to meeting with you in the near future as your schedule allows.

Sincerely,

(Name)

Address to show you are a constituent.