

## **High Quality Child Care and Universal Pre-K to Virginians**

### **Background:**

In 2016, sending a child to daycare in Virginia was more expensive than sending a child to college. According to 2016 statistics from Child Care Aware, the average yearly cost of infant daycare in the Commonwealth (\$12,200) exceeded in-state tuition rates at public universities (\$11,818). On average, married Virginians with one child in daycare spent 12% of their income, while single parents with two children spent a whopping 80.3% of their total income on daycare alone in 2016.

This is unacceptable: staggeringly high child care costs shrink Virginia's workforce and lock-in educational disadvantages for middle-class and poor children before they ever set foot in a classroom. These effects echo throughout a child's life, potentially increasing crime rates and raising costs to society as a whole. Obscene child care costs result in extra burdens for Virginia businesses as well, which must contend with less productive parents and less educated workers entering the labor force.

**Therefore, be it Resolved that,** the 2017 Eighth District Democratic Convention:

- Affirms that to remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to reduce the burden on middle-class Virginian families, the Commonwealth must provide high quality child care and universal pre-K to all Virginians.
- Calls on the Virginia General Assembly to make a High-Quality Child Care Tax Credit available that is paid directly to providers on a monthly basis to help families afford child care with families contributing up to 10% percent of their income toward child care fees on a sliding scale.
- Calls on the Virginia General Assembly to amend Virginia code 22.1-254 to make free public education available starting at age 3, rather than 6.