

**United Way
of Santa Barbara County**

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January 4, 2022

Mr. Jaime Valdez
City of Goleta
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, California, 93117

Dear Jaime,

Since its inception, United Way of Santa Barbara County (UWSBC), has worked alongside dedicated community partners to provide resources and tools to support students and families throughout the county. Designed to meet critical needs, United Way targets these efforts through programming and initiatives that focus on school readiness and academic achievement, financial empowerment, and response and recovery in times of community crisis. Driven by the vision of more resilient communities and supported by committed networks of leaders and organizations, United Way is continually seeking out opportunities to fortify families and students in their financial and educational futures. At the intersection of these focus areas, United Way has identified a significant need in childcare for local families.

For working parents with young children, a return or continuation of their participation in the workforce is heavily influenced by the cost and availability of childcare. For many households, the cost of childcare almost negates the benefit of earning an additional income. The federal limits on income for traditional assistance programs leaves out a significant group of families who are above the qualifying line, but still struggle to afford quality care for young children. This group, often referred to as the “missing middle,” remain in dire need of support on their path to financial stability.

This issue is widespread in any given year; however, with the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, families are more vulnerable than ever to increased costs for essentials. The childcare space has suffered the same challenges as many businesses in the last two years. Staffing issues, increased costs for facilities and materials, and health and safety restrictions have affected both availability and affordability for childcare providers throughout the county. For families in the “missing middle,” childcare costs, already representing a large portion of monthly expenditures, have only grown. Paired with additional pandemic-related challenges faced over the last two years, including furloughs, lost jobs and benefits, and housing, these families are reaching a breaking point.

United Way seeks to provide these families with direct aid to target this gap in financial relief. In partnership with licensed childcare providers, workplaces, and local agencies, United Way aims to establish a scholarship program to ease the burden of childcare costs on households who fall outside the limits of federal support programs. With extensive experience in providing direct relief to local households and a history in program development serving children and families, United Way is uniquely positioned to develop and maintain this program and continue its work in supporting families in the ways that matter most.

About the Childcare Project:

Traditional measures of poverty drastically underestimate the actual need for families experiencing financial instability. Formulas like the ones developed to identify the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are based on single, simplified indicators that fail to tell the entire story of a household's ability to meet basic needs. In the case of the FPL, the current metric is based on underestimated costs for food and fail to take into account variable costs of living, which can change drastically throughout the country. In response to outdated metrics like the FPL, United Ways of California produces an annual report entitled *The Real Cost Measure*, which dictates a more holistic approach to identifying standards of poverty here in California. The Real Cost Measure (RCM) is a benchmark that accounts for factors that expose the "missing middle," or families whose income leaves them ineligible for programs designed for those who fall under standard levels such as the FPL, but who remain severely impacted by factors that prevent mobility and impactful change in their financial situation. Though these households are making enough to meet basic needs as defined by traditional measures, hidden or underestimated costs, such as childcare and variable cost of living in different regions continue to keep these families in a constant state of financial stress. One of the major factors considered in the RCM is the cost of childcare, a particularly heavy burden for families with children between the ages of 0-5. In the most recent report, for families living in California, "54% of households with children under six years of age fall below the Real Cost Measure, and that rate jumps to 75% for single mothers with children under six. Over half of households with young children live below the Real Cost Measure."

The average cost of childcare in Santa Barbara for a family as referenced above is approximately \$2,600 a month. Annually, this would result in a family of four spending an average of \$31,200 on childcare. The median adjusted household income for a family of four in our county is approximately \$90,913. For that family to have both children in daily care, the family can expect to spend an average of 34% of their annual income on childcare expenses. Though these costs decrease as children phase into elementary school and beyond, this early period is extremely difficult for parents of young children who need childcare to participate in the workforce.

In line with their Strategic Plan goal to provide affordable, quality childcare to local families, the City of Goleta, in partnership with the City of Santa Barbara, commissioned UWSBC to facilitate an assessment of local childcare needs. Results showed that not only are working parents struggling to afford care, but they are also impacted by availability of quality, licensed care. Out of 623 survey participants, 53% reported that they were dissatisfied with local options for childcare and 70% of parents said that their experience finding care was difficult.

"Everywhere there are such long waitlists! It's also so, so expensive! [It's] hard to make the choice between working full time just to pay for childcare plus a little extra versus just not working to be a full-time caregiver. There has to be a better way! It feels so impossible to work and parent." – Local parent

The survey not only brought to light the general need for support in the childcare space, but it also yielded valuable data specific to the Cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara. Availability, demographics, difficulties, and challenges experienced by both providers and parents were collected and are at UWSBC's disposal to guide the childcare project in this current phase and in any future expansions. Utilizing this data, UWSBC will directly target areas of the childcare space that will most efficiently serve the residents of these cities.

As a provider of essential educational programming to vulnerable students throughout the county, United Way views the development of this program as an extension of efforts to supplement at-risk students and their educational future. Stability, both financially and emotionally, in the home is essential to many of the outcomes that United Way's programming looks to achieve for the at-risk students that we serve. Supporting working parents in their efforts to find quality childcare will ease financial stress at home and ensure a brighter

start to their children's educational futures. In addition to an extensive history in supporting children in education, UWSBC looks forward to utilizing its unique experience in program development within the childcare space. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, UWSBC worked closely with dedicated partners and foundations to facilitate the Emergency Child Care Initiative, providing first responders and essential employees with childcare services. Up to 278 children from at-risk families were provided with safe and enriching childcare spaces, enabling parents to perform essential duties for the community during the crisis. Throughout the process of forming the initiative, UWSBC created lasting partnerships with local childcare providers and professionals that continue to inform current efforts to support families in this space. Alongside community partners like the City of Goleta, UWSBC was able to translate experiences with these families into collaboratives like the Learning & Enrichment Centers, supporting local schools and students with remote instruction and distance learning for school-aged students.

UWSBC looks forward to dedicating its renewed focus and extensive experience in crisis response and recovery to continue building a responsive network of providers, employers, and agency officials that can efficiently come together to support this program for local families. Building adaptable frameworks and collaboratives to quickly respond to local needs in the midst of crisis has enabled UWSBC to create programs like the childcare initiative to provide efficient, impactful relief to local families for years to come.

Outcomes, Methods, and Reporting:

United Way looks to provide 100 children and their families with annual childcare scholarships. Partnering with local, licensed childcare facilities throughout Santa Barbara County, United Way seeks to establish a network of providers and connect them with funding to support families with children in their care. Additional tiers of support will be targeted towards families on the waitlists for selected childcare facilities. Relationships will also be developed with local employers to reach working parents who are expecting or are having difficulties finding future childcare.

Target populations for this program:

- Working parents living in the Santa Barbara/Goleta regions with children ages 0-5 in a licensed childcare setting.
- Working parents currently seeking childcare or are currently on waitlists for licensed childcare.
- Stay-at-home/expecting parents who have been unable to consider a return to work due to inability to find or afford quality childcare.

Methods:

- United Way will collaborate with local, licensed childcare facilities throughout the cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, working from the list of providers acquired from the Emergency Child Care Initiative and partnerships with organizations such as Family Resource and Referral to select childcare facilities to participate in the program.
- Selected childcare facilities will have the opportunity to offer scholarships to qualifying parents with currently enrolled children, as well as those on their waitlist.
- Parents interested in participating in the scholarship program will apply directly with United Way, demonstrating income qualifications, and agreeing to scholarship program rules.
- Scholarships will be awarded on a sliding scale based on income level.
- Selected families will be beneficiaries of scholarship funds; funds will be paid directly to approved childcare facilities, for the upcoming year of care.
- Depending on availability of funding, participating families will have the opportunity to reapply for the program for following years, until the enrolled child turns five.

Reporting:

- United Way will be responsible for the application and approval process for scholarship recipients.
- The organization will manage all payments on behalf of recipients to approved childcare facilities.
- Quarterly reports will be provided of all disbursements, enrollment info, and participant information
- United Way will administer quarterly surveys to participants and childcare providers, in addition to a final survey at the end of the scholarship term.
- Annual data will be shared with partner organizations in order to analyze the need for additional and future funding.

All qualifying childcare providers must maintain licensing through the term of their participation in the scholarship program. Providers must also agree to follow the COVID-19 guidelines for childcare that were developed by the CDC to prevent the spread of the disease and must ensure that childcare workers are trained on how to properly screen children for COVID-19 symptoms, as well as how to properly sanitize facilities on an ongoing basis and follow all recommended spacing and isolation procedures. County-wide resources will be in place to support the implementation of the guidelines. Programs will be provided support for the implementation of the health and safety guidelines, and other program assistance. Childcare is expected to be the highest quality possible, to ensure children's wellbeing, and to allow parents to do their essential work without worrying about their children's care.

The current working estimate for program funding is \$600,000, with anticipated funds from both the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta. Program costs includes UWSBC's program management, research, network development, program marketing efforts, direct payments, and reporting. UWSBC also expects to direct its philanthropic dollars to support additional scholarship funding through this program, The project budget assumes an average of \$7,800 per approved scholarship, with awards varying based on a sliding scale. The current goal is to provide 100 children and their families with partial scholarships for one year of childcare. Total scholarship funding for selected recipients over the course of the award year will total \$570,000.

We deeply appreciate the City of Goleta's commitment to building better futures for thousands of children and families in this community. If you have any questions or would like to support the Childcare Project, please contact Steve Ortiz at sortiz@unitedwaysb.org.

Best regards,



Steve Ortiz
President & CEO

David Cutaia

From: C. Dave G <cdg55@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 04, 2022 11:38 PM
To: City Clerk Group
Cc: Deborah Lopez; Liana Campos; David Cutaia; Dave G
Subject: Agenda Item A.1 21-506 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update and Proposed ARPA Spending Plan, meeting date 01/05/22.
Attachments: Comments and Recommendations RE Agenda Item A.1 21-506 American Rescue Plan Act, Update and Spending, 01 05 22.pdf

Dear City Clerk – I respectfully request the distribution of my attached written response regarding Agenda Item A.1 21-506 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update and Proposed ARPA Spending Plan, meeting date 01/05/22.

My name is C. Dave Gaughen, email address of cdg55@earthlink.net, and phone number of (805) 275-6457.

Presently, I do not plan on speaking on Agenda Item A.1 21-506.

Respectfully,

C. Dave Gaughen

C. DAVE GAUGHEN
7456 Evergreen Drive
Goleta, CA 93117
Telephone: (805) 275 – 6457
Email: cdg55@earthlink.net

January 04, 2022

To: The Mayor and Council Members
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, CA 93117

Subj: Comments and Recommendations Regarding Agenda Item “A.1 21-506 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update and Proposed ARPA Spending Plan.”

Ref. (1) Agenda Item A.1 21-506, Meeting Date: January 05, 2022, “SUBJECT: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update and Proposed ARPA Spending Plan (101 pages).”

Dear Madam Mayor and Council Members:

First, I wish to thank Councilmember Richards and Mayor Pro Tempore Kasdin for mentioning two of my immediate concerns regarding past agenda item SB 1383 Organics Ordinance, submitted via my written public comment on 12/21/21. Thank you. Additionally, perhaps the Mayor and Council Members could briefly re-visit this ordinance since it does include all residential customers (i.e., generators/organic waste generators approximately two or more years in advance, if ever, of a state residential mandate) as well as generator fines of up to \$1,000 (third or subsequent violation) effective thirty (30) days after the passage of SB 1383 Organics Ordinance. However, there is an Education Period for Non-Compliance (up to December 31, 2023) and Civil Penalties for Non-Compliance do not begin until January 1, 2024. Still, the general residential population most certainly has no idea that “beginning January 1, 2022 and through December 31, 2023, the City will conduct inspections, may conduct remote monitoring, route reviews or waste evaluations, and compliance reviews ... to determine compliance ...”.

Moving on to Agenda Item A.1, “American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update and Proposed ARPA Spending Plan.”

Comments and Recommendations

After review of the presentation contained in Reference 1 (pages 78 – 98, slides 1 – 21), I highly recommend that the Director of Public Works and his Assistance, representative(s) of the Goleta Water District (GWD), representative(s) of Goleta West Sanitation District (GWSD), and other local government agencies be invited to attend this meeting and future meetings to assist in the identification of active priority Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) in advance of initiating the allocation/setting aside of the proposed \$300K for one time grant funding. If the GWD and GWSD are classified as other government agencies identified to receive \$700K of ARPA support (see pages 90, 95, slides 13, 18, respectively), perhaps the funding to these types of government agencies could be increased to support their active priority CIPs.

Furthermore, based exclusively on the review of the presentation in Ref. 1, I did not see a line item earmarked to directly: 1) Support immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses (page 80, slide 1), and 2) Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector

(page 83, slide 6). For example, at the beginning of our current Covid situation which immediately followed, I believe, the ending of our prior drought situation, the GWD decided to raise their overall water rates amidst the numerous public comments citing that they were experiencing unprecedented financial hardships and would be financially challenged to meet the proposed rate increases. In short, two board members voted to postpone the rate increases until after our Covid situation normalized whereas the other three board members unfortunately voting in favor of the rate increases. As such, something like a one-time, City of Goleta ARPA funded economic stabilization directed at lowering the water bill cost of households and small businesses would be greatly appreciated (even something as low as \$40 per household and small business would help; or any other economic stabilization that directly assists households and small businesses in advance of setting aside \$300K for one time grant funding).

In support of the above, Page 88/Slide 11 reads in relevant part, “Use other dedicated grants and programs first whenever possible and save ARPA funds for priorities not eligible for other federal and state assistance programs.”

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

C. Dave Gaughen