



STATEMENT OF DR. LYNETTE M. FRAGA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CHILD CARE AWARE® OF AMERICA
TO THE
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
September 10, 2015

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, and Members of the Committee:

As the Executive Director of Child Care Aware® of America (CCAoA) since October 2012, and as the adult child of a retired sergeant major who served in the Army for nearly 30 years, a former Army active duty and Reservist spouse in addition to a former director of a child development center for the Army Child and Youth Services, I know well the needs of Army families. As importantly, I am committed to effectively delivering the services they deserve. I grew up Army and have been proud to serve military families throughout my career. In response to the Committee's request, I respectfully submit this statement regarding the performance and commitment of CCAoA to Army families during its operation of the Army Fee Assistance Program, and our ongoing work with the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps in selecting and finding affordable, quality child care for the children of uniformed members of the military.

CCAoA, formerly known as the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), is the nation's leading voice for child care, working with more than 400 state and local Child Care Resource & Referral agencies nationwide to ensure that families in 99 percent of all populated ZIP codes in the United States have access to high-quality, affordable child care. Our mission is to advance a child care system that effectively serves all children and families.

Since 2004, Installation Management Command (IMCOM) G9 Family and Morale Welfare & Recreation Command (FMWRC) programs have offered Army Child Care Fee Assistance Programs to uniformed personnel. Between 2004 and 2014, CCAoA operated the Army Fee Assistance Program – providing child care subsidies to Army families who could not take advantage of child care centers on-post, ensuring quality providers were available, and assisting families in identifying providers that best meet their needs. Since 2004, CCAoA has operated the Navy, Marine, and Air Force Fee Assistance Programs, as well as the Exceptional Family Member Fee Assistance (EFMP) program for the Navy and Air Force since 2008 and 2011 respectively, and is proud to continuously serve in this capacity.

During the years operating the Army Fee Assistance Program, CCAoA consistently received praise from Army parents as reflected in testimonials received in the year prior to the transition of the contract to GSA (see examples in Attachment I). CCAoA currently serves nearly 4,000 Navy, Air Force and Marine families; processes payments in five days or less, processes completed application packages in ten days or less, and distributes approximately \$3,000,000 in monthly subsidy payments.



Transition Planning and Implementation

On November 25, 2013, CCAoA received formal notification from the U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) G-9, Child, Youth, and School Services that the Army Fee Assistance Programs would be transitioned to and wholly operated by the General Services Administration (GSA). IMCOM emphasized that the quality of CCAoA's work was not in question. CCAoA committed to work with IMCOM and GSA to ensure a smooth transition of operations and a continuum of service for military families (see critical dates of transition in Attachment II). Staff from CCAoA met with GSA and IMCOM staff on December 12, 2013 to discuss contractual and legal issues, communication with providers and parents, and a timeline of activities to be undertaken during the transition period. CCAoA provided continuous and responsive support to the GSA throughout the entire transition process. While the transition was originally scheduled to be completed by March 31, 2014, at the request of the Army CCAoA continued to operate the program until October 1, 2014.

Transition Activities: Communication

To ensure consistent messaging and avoid confusion for the families and providers in the program, the Army developed customized call scripts for parents and providers which were utilized by all CCAoA staff. Similarly, emails for parents and providers were drafted by the Army and reviewed by all parties before dissemination by CCAoA. Four webinars were scheduled to address parent questions. In addition, CCAoA furnished additional questions from parents and providers to the Army for review and the development of appropriate responses. Following the transition of program operations, CCAoA continued to receive phone calls/emails from covered families/providers. These were forwarded to the Army for resolution.

Transition Activities: Ongoing Subsidy Payments

In January 2014, there were a total of 8,358 families and 12,572 children enrolled in the Army program administered by CCAoA, while providers received \$2,983,338 in subsidy payments. Subsidy payments continued to be processed within the Army requirement of 10 days. To ensure a seamless transition, CCAoA also established a Resolution Hotline to address any challenges parents or providers were facing around payments. During the last 10 months in which CCAoA operated the program under contract, the hotline received an average of 3.4 calls per month. Less than 10 percent of the calls received during this period were payment-related and problems were typically rectified the same day.

Child Care Aware® of America has always been committed to serving Army families and stands prepared to meet their needs – now and in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record.