[PUT ON YOUR LETTERHEAD AND EMAIL COPY TO advocacy@kidango.org]

Submit your support letter through the legislature’s online portal at: https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates. Click on “Submit a Letter.” See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWWEuLoqPng if you need help. (If you have any difficulty submitting your letter through the portal, please email advocacy@kidango.org).

April XX, 2021

The Honorable Blanca Rubio

California State Assembly

State Capitol

Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1361 (B. Rubio)- Support - Expulsion and Suspension Procedures in Early Learning and Care Programs**

Dear Assembly Member O’Donnell:

**[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]** is writing to express our strong support for Assembly Bill 1361 (B. Rubio) and request your “Aye” vote. AB 1361 would prohibit suspensions and expulsions in early learning and care programs except as a last resort. This bill would also strengthen early childhood mental health consultation to build the capacity of early childhood teachers to promote positive mental health, buffer the effects of toxic stress and trauma, and bring out the most optimal development and learning of each child.

National data indicates that children are expelled, suspended, and counseled out of early learning and child care programs at much higher rates than in K-12 education. Black, Latino and American Indian children, especially boys, are disproportionately impacted by this practice. When children are excluded from early learning classrooms, they miss out on the opportunity to develop key social, emotional and academic skills.

California’s Early Learning and Care Master Plan has set a goal to strengthen programs and services to support children’s learning and development by increasing equitable treatment of children through severely diminishing the use of suspensions and expulsions. AB 1361 will help reduce the expulsion and suspension for children in preschool and early care settings while ensuring California’s early learning and care system, administrators and teachers have the tools they need to begin correcting injustices by increasing access to early childhood mental health consultation supports.

By supporting early learning educators and eliminating exclusionary disciplinary policies that disproportionately harm young learners, we subsequently benefit the entire community by acting against implicit and explicit factors causing students to miss time from the early learning and care setting. **[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]** places equity and opportunity front and center. For these reasons, we support AB 1361.

Sincerely,

[YOUR FULL NAME]

[YOUR TITLE]