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March 13, 2026

The Honorable David Valadao  
Chairman  
Legislative Branch Subcommittee  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adriano Espaillat  
Ranking Member  
Legislative Branch Subcommittee  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Valadao and Ranking Member Espaillat:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding my priorities for the Fiscal Year 2027 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill.

I urge the Subcommittee to include \$20 million to implement a childcare benefit program for all House staff, including district office employees. The Committee recognizes that childcare costs are a major hardship for families across the nation and that helping to cover those costs can be a major incentive to recruiting and retaining employees, including those of the House of Representatives. This request would build on the framework Congress has already enacted for using appropriated funds to support affordable childcare for House employees and would extend it to our district office employees as well.

Currently, district office employees must find and pay for childcare entirely on their own. This creates an inequity between D.C. and district-based staff and places a disproportionate burden on the working parents who keep our district offices running. It is long overdue that we correct this imbalance and support district-based employees with their childcare needs.

As we all know, childcare costs represent a substantial financial burden for families, with weekly expenses continuing to rise. On average, American families pay \$321 a week for childcare. In every district in the country, families are experiencing childcare deserts and staffing shortages within existing childcare centers.

In addition, a dedicated childcare benefit for all House staff would strengthen the Legislative Branch workforce by improving recruitment, retention, and morale. Providing expanded childcare assistance is a practical way to ensure that our workforce more fully reflects the diversity of the communities we represent and that talented staff do not feel compelled to leave public service.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Subcommittee provide \$20 million to implement a childcare benefit program for all House staff, including district office employees, and include report language in the FY 2027 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. I look forward to working with the Committee on House Administration to develop a subsidized childcare program that meets the needs of all our employees, not just those in Washington, D.C

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rashida Tlaib". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light yellow rectangular background.

Rashida Tlaib

Member of Congress