The Honorable Carol Liu  
California Senate  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814  

RE: SB 192 (Liu) Early Learning and Support Act- SUPPORT  

Dear Senator Liu:  

On behalf of First 5 LA, I am writing to express our support for SB 192, which would establish the Early Learning and Education Support Act. The bill would help California develop a comprehensive early learning and school support system that would promote access to safe, high-quality programs.

First 5 LA oversees the Los Angeles County allocation of funds from Proposition 10, which added a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California. Funds raised help pay for health care, education and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age 5 and their families. First 5 LA’s mission is to increase the number of young children who are physically and emotionally healthy, safe and ready to learn. One of our goals is to improve the quality of early care and education programs so that children become ready for kindergarten.

SB 192 would require the consolidation of early education program contracts and change terminology from child care and development to early learning and educational support. These changes would assist in bringing California’s early learning system into the 21st century by aligning the work of the early learning community on multiple efforts, while setting the foundation for our early learning system: for reinvestment after years of devastating budget cuts.

The bill would also require California to provide information to parents seeking options for high-quality early education and learning support programs. This would ensure that families seeking referrals to child care and development programs, including those eligible for the Alternative Payment program and Cal WORKS Child Care, receive comprehensive consumer information that would help them make informed decisions regarding high quality programs.
Studies have shown that quality early childhood education programs have a number of benefits, including improving children's readiness for school, reducing grade-level retention, and increasing the likelihood of college attendance. As a child advocacy and grant-making organization, First 5 LA is committed to expanding high-quality early education and the development of a stable and skilled workforce in Los Angeles County. First 5 LA has invested in Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and its 5-Star Quality Assessment and Improvement System which includes measures for teacher qualifications, early childhood environment, and adult-child ratio.

By taking the necessary steps to modernize and build upon California's early learning system, SB 192 will help provide high-quality early learning and educational support services that foster school readiness for more of our children. First 5 LA is in strong support of SB 192 and we look forward to partnering with you to highlight the important role that early care and education plays in securing an educated, versatile, and stable workforce to help keep California's economy vibrant and strong for years to come.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Tessa Charnofsky, Government Affairs Manager, at TCharnofsky@First5LA.org.

Sincerely,

Kim Belshé  
Executive Director

KB:rv

cc: Assembly Committee on Appropriations