

Championing Success: Business Organizations for Early Childhood Investments

Today more than ever, businesses need employees who are well prepared to succeed in the labor market. But the current workforce pipeline is not sufficient—not for businesses who need well-prepared employees, not for young people who need good jobs, and not for the nation that needs a growing economy.

To address this situation, we must start building a foundation for success in the earliest years of children’s lives, when they begin to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviors they will need to do well in school and beyond. Evidence-based early childhood programs—such as quality early education; physical, mental, and dental health care; and voluntary home visiting/parent mentoring—help build the foundation young children need to thrive.

Recognizing they have vital interests at stake, business organizations have become outspoken champions of effective investments in early childhood. ReadyNation, a project of America’s Promise Alliance, and the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) conducted a survey to document the breadth of support for early childhood policies and programs among formal business membership organizations. The results are below:

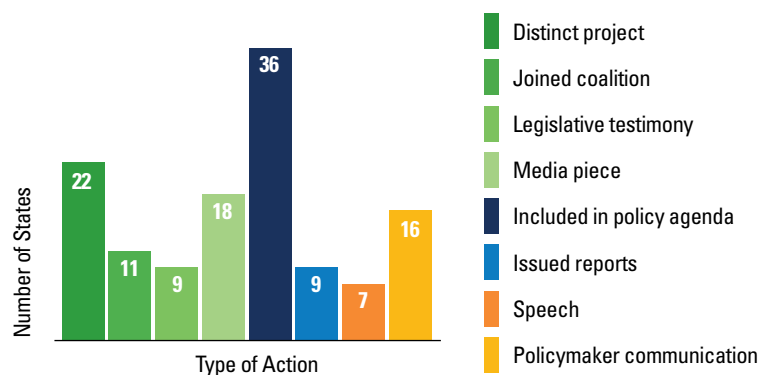
Many business organizations support early childhood

“The Chamber recognizes that the fundamental skills employers demand—creativity, communication, team working, problem solving, and critical thinking—are forming in the first five years of life. Therefore, improving children’s lives in their earliest years is not only the right thing to do, but also what businesses need to succeed.”

—Anthony Iannelli, President and CEO, Greater Lehigh Valley (PA) Chamber of Commerce

- In all but one state (Nevada, plus the District of Columbia), at least one of the surveyed local or statewide business organizations took public action in the past five years to support investments in early childhood. In all states, individual business leaders have become public champions for early childhood.
- A sizable majority of state chambers and business roundtables, along with nearly half of large city chambers, reported taking some form of action.

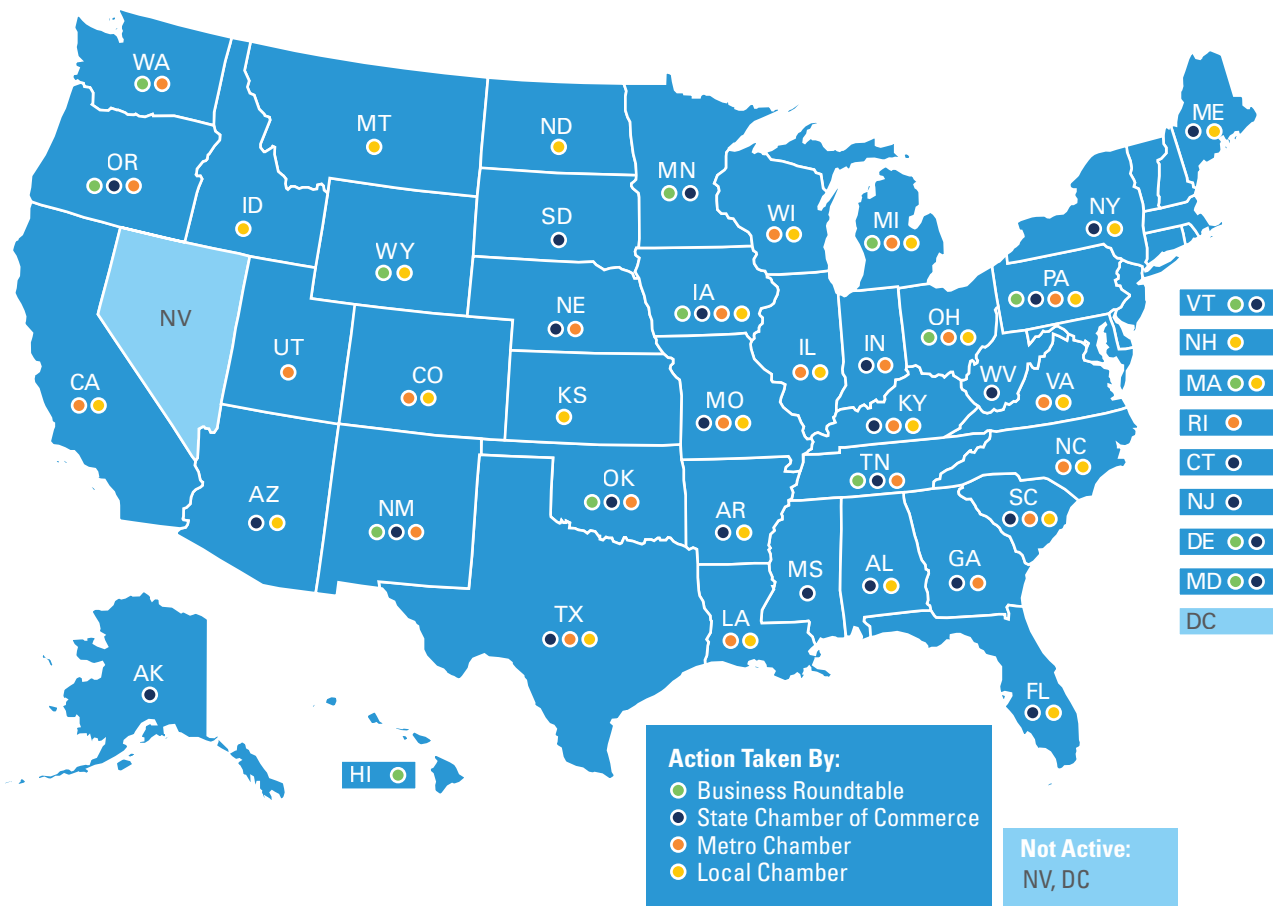
Figure 1: Type of action taken by at least one large chamber/BRT in the state, by number of states



Business organizations support a diverse set of topics under multiple frames:

- While early education and pre-kindergarten were the most commonly supported early childhood topics, business organizations are also supporting a broader agenda, including home visiting, health and child care.
- Most business organizations surveyed framed their early childhood work as support for education, but a large number used the frame of economic or workforce development. This reflects a recognition that early childhood services are a key strategy for educational success, workforce development, and economic vitality.

Figure 2: Types of business organizations supporting early childhood by state



ReadyNation, a project of America's Promise Alliance, is a business partnership for early childhood and economic success. Our mission is to amplify the voice of business leaders in support of early childhood policies and programs that strengthen our economy and workforce. ReadyNation is a key component of Grad Nation, a large and growing movement of individuals, organizations, and communities working together and with America's Promise to end the dropout crisis.

Add your voice.

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The full report is available at www.ReadyNation.org.

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