

## Children First Action Fund General 2022 Survey Results

The Children First Action Fund is surveying all candidates for Pennsylvania House and Senate to learn more about their views on issues affecting the lives of children. We invite you to learn more by reviewing their responses below; by contacting their campaigns; and by following them on social media. Let me know your views on the importance of ensuring young children in Pennsylvania get the early education supports they need and deserve.

**Name:** Cathy Spahr

**Current Job:** Senior Transportation Planner

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**You are running for election in which district?** HD160

**Q: What are your views on the benefits, or drawbacks, of allocating additional state funds for high-quality pre-k education?**

A: I think it is important to allocate fund for high quality pre-k. Data has shown this is important for a child's developmental process.

**Q: How important, or unimportant, are increased public resources to expand access and affordability to high-quality child care to working families in your district?**

A: We must increase public resources to expand access and affordability for high quality child care. As a working mom myself, I understand how important it was to have access to assistance in affording child care. As it was, I had to wait 6 weeks before that funding was available. That wait time is prohibitive to families who can't afford child care without it.

**Q: Should the wages for child care workers and preschool teachers be commensurate with those of other educators with similar qualifications and experience?**

A: Absolutely. Their jobs are no less important or valuable- and some might say their job is more difficult.

**Q: Will you support the expansion of state investment dollars to serve those in your district who can benefit from home visiting?**

A: Yes! This is crucial for General caregivers and children. Parenting is hard, and can be lonely. Support like this can make all the difference in the world.

**Q: In addition to making child care more accessible and affordable, what other policies would you champion to help businesses facing a workforce shortage?**

A: As a transportation planner. one of my goals is to make sure people have access to transportation- whether that is public transit, trail, or bicycles. That access also needs to be affordable. Focusing on access and affordability to transit is an important component of work force development.

**Q: What other government resources or policies would you consider for families that are struggling with keeping costs, especially child care, under control?**



A: All options should be on the table to pursue ensuring that families have access to childcare. Biden's policy to cap the cost based upon income at 7% is a policy that could be pursued here in PA.

**Q: Which mental health supports are needed most in your district and how will you work to increase access to families that need them?**

A: The mental health crisis is real, and deadly. We have a shortage of mental health specialists, and access is limited. Often times families are waiting too long to see someone. To ramp up the mental health specialist shortage, we should consider waiving students loans like we do for public school teachers.

**Q: Would you support the creation of a refundable State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)? Why/why not?**

A: Yes, we need to reduce child poverty and help families struggling to make ends meet. The cycle of poverty can be hard to break free from. By helping people break free of that cycle we are strengthening our communities and our future.

**Q: What would you do, if elected, to expand the access to affordable broadband internet?**

A: As a planner, one of the frustrating things about the infrastructure bill is that the communities that need the infrastructure most don't have the means to pursue the funding. I want to work to make sure those communities have the ability to pursue the funding so they can bring broadband to their region.