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## **ARIZONA PERMITS THE USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS FOR CHILDCARE**

*Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes issued an official opinion establishing childcare as a permissible campaign expense, bringing the state in line with federal guidelines and 34 other states (plus Washington D.C.) that have approved Campaign Funds for Childcare.*

*Vote Mama Foundation is the only organization tracking the use of Campaign Funds for Childcare and working to authorize the measure in all 50 states.*

**NEW YORK** — Yesterday, September 16, 2024, Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes issued an [official opinion](#) confirming that privately raised campaign funds can be used for dependent care expenses, provided those expenses enable the candidate or another individual to perform campaign activities. With this decision, [Arizona joins 34 other states and Washington D.C.](#) that have approved [Campaign Funds for Childcare](#).

The opinion was issued at the request of Arizona State Senator Eva Diaz and signed by State Representatives Stacey Travers, Quantá Crews, and Sarah Liguori — all mothers of minor children serving in the Arizona state legislature.

It is no secret that the cost of childcare is a barrier that holds millions of parents back. It is also a hurdle that severely impacts the representation of parents and caregivers, especially mothers, in office. In fact, according to 2022 data from Vote Mama Foundation, [less than 7 percent](#) of Arizona state legislators are mothers with minor children. This decision from Attorney General Kris Mayes, the first mother to ever serve in this role, removes a significant barrier that has historically kept parents and caregivers out of the political arena and comes at no expense to taxpayers. By authorizing the use of campaign funds to pay for dependent care expenses directly related to campaign duties, Arizona will empower more caregivers to run for office and bring more advocates for children and families to the decision-making table.

“Caregiving responsibilities should never be the reason someone cannot run for office or serve their community. Unfortunately, for many candidates, the ability to run for office hinges on

access to childcare, and the cost can keep them out of the political arena entirely. To get more parents and caregivers into every level of office, we must remove the structural barriers that prevent them from running in the first place,” **said Sarah Hague, Chief Program Officer at Vote Mama Foundation.** “Vote Mama Foundation envisions a future in which the cost of childcare would never hold a candidate back when making the decision to run for office. With this decision from Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes, we are now one step closer to making that vision a reality.”

“Moms of young children are outstanding leaders. They understand the issues related to what young children and their parents need. Moms of young children fight for working families and are not afraid to speak up for what’s fair. When moms campaign they work tirelessly to talk to voters. The campaign is a full time job. This is why moms should be able to use Campaign Funds for Childcare. The hard work of our moms while campaigning will help our state when they win!” - **Arizona State Senator Eva Diaz**

“No one has more skin in the game than those fighting for their kids' future. 'We the people', should mean exactly what it says..."WE, the people." This opinion from the Attorney General's office will allow parents from all backgrounds to be able to participate in building a future for their children without the burden of childcare costs facing them that would otherwise prohibit some from running for office. We need ALL voices in the decision-making process, especially when it comes to creating a framework for governing for generations to come.” - **Arizona State Representative Stacey Travers**

"As both a parent and a candidate, I understand the significant time commitment involved in campaigning, especially when balancing caregiving responsibilities for children or family members. With this opinion from our Attorney General, childcare costs are no longer a major barrier to entry and will allow more mothers, fathers, and caregivers the opportunity to pursue political roles in ways they couldn't before." - **Arizona State Representative Sarah Liguori**

“Historically, political service has been unattainable for parents and caregivers due to barriers such as lack of resources. With the attorney general’s clarification, Arizonans with political aspirations will have one less barrier of entry into political public service. Political leaders should look like Arizona and I’m pleased to see child care won’t be a reason a mom, dad or caregiver can’t share their gifts and passions fighting for a thriving Arizona.” - **Arizona State Representative Quantá Crews**

#### Background:

In 2018, Liuba Grechen Shirley (Vote Mama Foundation Founder and CEO) ran for Congress and petitioned the Federal Election Commission (FEC) and became the first woman in history to receive federal approval to spend Campaign Funds for Childcare (CFCC). This unanimous, bipartisan decision paved the way for more parents to run for office — 68 federal candidates have since used CFCC, both moms and dads, Democrats and Republicans. The FEC ruling made it easier for parents to run at the federal level, but it does not apply to candidates campaigning for state and local office. Vote Mama Foundation is the only organization working

to authorize the use of Campaign Funds for Childcare in all 50 states. To date, 35 states and Washington D.C. have approved the use of Campaign Funds for Childcare.

According to a [recent Vote Mama Foundation report](#), Campaign Funds for Childcare spending has increased by 662% for federal candidates and 2,156% for state and local candidates since 2018.

Vote Mama Foundation is the leading source of research and analysis on the political participation of mothers in the United States. It works towards gender equity by normalizing mothers of minor children running for and serving in office, naming and dismantling the barriers that keep moms out of office and out of power, and enabling legislators to pass family-friendly policies. Vote Mama Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

To learn more about Vote Mama Foundation and Campaign Funds for Childcare, visit [votemamafoundation.org](http://votemamafoundation.org)

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