

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 15, 2024

**CONTACT:** [press@votemamafoundation.org](mailto:press@votemamafoundation.org); [marcus@votemamafoundation.org](mailto:marcus@votemamafoundation.org)



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

*Idaho Secretary of State Phil McGrane issued an advisory opinion establishing childcare as a permissible campaign expense, bringing the state in line with federal guidelines and 35 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** — On Friday, October 11th, Idaho Secretary of State Phil McGrane issued an official [advisory opinion](#) that allows for the use of campaign committee contributions to pay for dependent care expenses to the extent such expenses are incurred in connection with the campaign for public office of the candidate. With this decision, [Idaho joins 35 other states and Washington D.C.](#) that have approved [Campaign Funds for Childcare](#). The opinion was issued at the request of Trish Carter-Goodheart, a Nez Perce tribal Member and candidate running to represent District 6, Seat A, in the Idaho State House of Representatives.

The cost of childcare is an obstacle that holds back millions of parents and caregivers, and it is often a hurdle that impacts the ability to run for and serve in elected office. For many working families, running a campaign without dependent care for their family members is not feasible. As a result, fewer parents with young children serve in elected office. According to a [2024 Vote Mama Foundation report](#), nearly [nine percent](#) of Idaho state legislators are mothers of minor children. Having young children should never deter any parent from considering a run for office. This decision from the Idaho Secretary of State's Office means that young families will no longer have to factor in the cost of childcare when deciding to run for office and represent their communities. By authorizing Campaign Funds for Childcare, Idaho will empower more parents and caregivers to run for office and help elected officials sustainably serve.

“The cost of childcare should never be a deterrent for caregivers aspiring to enter the political arena. Unfortunately, many everyday parents and caregivers battle the high cost of childcare when trying to take the next step. Idaho has taken a significant step to level the playing field and

ensure caregivers from all walks of life can run for office and help elected officials serve sustainably,” **said Sarah Hague, Chief Program Officer at Vote Mama Foundation.** “Vote Mama Foundation is fighting for a world in which the cost of childcare never holds anyone back from making a meaningful difference and serving their communities. With the recent authorization of Campaign Funds for Childcare in Idaho, we are one step closer to living in that world.”

“I am elated that this barrier has finally been removed,” **said Carter-Goodheart.** “It’s an honor to leave a legacy that allows future candidates to focus on their campaigns without sacrificing their family’s needs. It sends a clear message: all candidates, regardless of their caregiving responsibilities, should have an equal opportunity to run for office.”

#### 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, 36 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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