



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on February 20, 2019

## Warren Proposes Federal Universal Childcare Program

Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) unveiled Tuesday [her proposal](#) to create a \$70-billion federal program to provide free or low-cost childcare for American families.

“My plan provides the kind of big, structural change we need [to] transform child care from a privilege for the wealthy to a right for every child in America,” Warren writes.

Of course, if a scarce service such as childcare is to be a “right,” those who can’t afford it will have to be subsidized, under the threat of fines or imprisonment, by those who can. To Warren, that means the ultra-rich must be soaked via a [wealth tax](#) that is expected to net the government \$2.75 trillion over a decade.



According to Warren, “There are two big problems with child care in America: it’s hard to find high-quality care, and where you do find it, that care is extraordinarily expensive.” Over half of Americans, she says, live in “communities without an adequate number of licensed child care options.” (Heaven forbid they seek care from someone lacking the state’s imprimatur.) Those who can locate childcare will find themselves paying as much as 36 percent of their family income for care for a single child — more if they are single parents and/or have multiple children.

Warren proposes having the federal government subsidize childcare for all families who desire it. Families earning less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level would get free childcare; those earning more would pay no more than seven percent of their income for childcare.

Naturally, with federal subsidies comes federal control. Although Warren’s program proposes a partnership between Washington and local communities, she adds that “providers would be held to high national standards.” Who doubts that these standards will include indoctrination in the evils of capitalism, the dangers of man-made global warming, the glories of the LGBT lifestyle, and other progressive pet projects?

Warren argues that her plan will have untold benefits. Giving parents peace of mind about affording childcare will grant “them the freedom to choose the best work and child care situation for themselves.” Getting kids into educational programs early will help them lead “happier, healthier, and more productive lives as adults.” Boosting the wages of childcare workers will help the economy grow.

Warren’s proposal, besides being unconstitutional, also raises a host of other issues.

To begin with, it’s based on “faulty assumptions,” observes *National Review*’s [Carrie Lukas](#). “Foremost, it assumes that most Americans want their children to attend day-care centers, when in fact, most parents would prefer to be able to care for their children themselves or rely on family-based care or the closest approximation to it.”



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“It also assumes that quality child-care centers are associated with positive educational and life outcomes for children,” Lukas notes, when, in fact, “much research points in the opposite direction.”

Furthermore, like most other political solutions, it amounts to a new government intervention to fix a problem created by previous government interventions. A [Mercatus Center study](#) cited by Lukas found that “regulations intended to improve the quality of child care ... do not necessarily affect the quality of care but do increase the cost of care.”

The alleged economic benefits of universal childcare are also suspect. Childcare workers might end up with more money to spend, but that is merely a wealth transfer from others. No new wealth would be created, so there would be no economic gain.

Although Warren’s program will be voluntary — for now — she expects it to nearly double the number of children getting “formal child care outside the home.” This will go a long way toward fulfilling the Left’s goal of [separating children from their parents](#) as early as possible in order to mold them into perfect little progressives.

Are the cost and quality of childcare real problems? Yes, but Warren’s proposed solution is nothing of the kind. As Lukas puts it, “It would be far better to focus on making life more affordable for *all* families, by reforming tax and regulatory policies that drive up the cost of living and make it more difficult to live on one income, than to layer on another costly government subsidy that only helps some.”

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