

Parent Voices Press Conference

Child Care Advocates Call “Foul” on Corporate Landlords Lawsuit Against Voter-Approved Prop C

By guest blogger Mary Ignatius
[Parent Voices](#) Statewide Organizer



This week I was honored to speak at a press conference at C5 Children’s Center, convened to address a [troubling lawsuit filed by corporate landlords](#) that threatens to take away our hard-earned win in June. Below are excerpts from my remarks. Scroll to the bottom of this page to see some of the media coverage.



“Hello, my name is Mary Ignatius. I am the Statewide Organizer of Parent Voices, a grassroots advocacy organization of parents fighting to make our child care system equitable for our children. I am also a San Francisco voter and a mother of two sons.

Parent Voices and thousands of community members have spent decades advocating for more investments in our child care system. We have partnered with economists, business voices, foundations, lawmakers and countless citizens to demand for a more equitable system for families and early educators.

So when big businesses and anti-tax groups file a lawsuit against the City, claiming that the

idea to invest in Early Care and Education was orchestrated by local government, ignoring decades of efforts that we have put into this system, we call “Foul.” **We are calling on them to drop their lawsuit and choose children, not corporate interests.**

The **Early Care and Education for All initiative wasn't imposed by City Hall, it was imposed by San Francisco voters**, following a signature gathering effort where **we collected double the number of signatures required to get on the ballot.**

We targeted non-frequent voters, particularly **women in low-income communities of color;** voters who are most impacted by failing systems but who want what's best for their children and their community.



The initiative also addressed **the needs of middle income families** who have been left out of government funded programs for “making too much money,” but who can't burden the cost of high quality child care, and who are fleeing the city.

And, **we addressed the abysmal wages we pay our early educators**, the majority of whom are paid less than dog walkers, yet are actual brain architects who prepare our kids for lifelong learning.

We didn't have a lot of money. The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) and other millionaire commercial property developers who don't live or vote in our City **spent \$1 million turning voters against our initiative.** We worked nights and weekends to contact and engage voters, and we did it with our children by our side.



As a community, we tested whether San Francisco voters believed that taxing millionaire commercial property owners and investing in early care and education was something they wanted. **We won.**

Now BOMA has partnered with Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association, the CA Business Roundtable, and the CA Business Properties Association to try and invalidate the will of San Francisco voters. **It is an outrage.**

While they have a blank check to fund this litigation, we don't have unlimited funds to fight it. But what we do have is the will of the voters, we have democracy, and we have the power to stand up to their bullying tactics.

We are calling on the Courts to end this charade. And we are calling on City Hall to continue the implementation process for the Early Care and Education for All Initiative.

We will be working with others impacted by the outcomes of this lawsuit to build a broad-based coalition to determine next steps."

We encourage everyone to channel their love for their children into social change. Connect with us (and watch videos of our press conference) on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) or email me at mary@parentvoices.org.

Media Coverage:

- [San Francisco Examiner](#)
- [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (second half of City Hall report)
- [KPFA Pacifica Evening News](#) (coverage begins at :50 minutes)



Parent Voices is a parent-led grassroots organization working to make quality child care affordable and accessible to all families in San Francisco and beyond.

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