

11-18-2024

## The Southern Nevada Care Economy: Challenges and Opportunities

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### Repository Citation

Tripp Umbach (2024). The Southern Nevada Care Economy: Challenges and Opportunities. 1-30.  
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# The Southern Nevada Care Economy

Challenges and  
Opportunities

November 2024





## Executive Summary

National policymakers increasingly recognize the care economy as an essential economic driver, contributing \$648 billion annually to the U.S. economy and supporting 3.6 million jobs. The care economy is also critical in driving economic development and prosperity in Southern Nevada.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as this Tripp Umbach analysis finds, Southern Nevada's care economy dramatically underperforms compared to national benchmarks and peer regions. High caregiving costs and limited access to care for children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities in Southern Nevada strain families, businesses, and public resources. This burden reduces workforce participation, productivity, and economic growth. Low pay and high turnover among care workers further escalate costs for employers, while unaffordable child or elder care forces many people to leave the workforce for unpaid caregiving roles, hindering regional economic resilience and sustainability. Addressing these issues in the care economy is vital to unlocking Southern Nevada's full economic and social potential.

While Nevada has been working to expand access to child care and elder care services through state programs and incentives, affordable care remains a challenge for many families in the state. Child care access in Nevada is linked to workforce shortages, with more than 25% of parents, especially women, reporting that the lack of affordable child care is a factor that forces them to leave the workforce. The escalating cost of care, driven by high demand, limited workforce, operational expenses, and inadequate public funding, has made services increasingly unaffordable. Families compete for limited childcare placements, further driving up costs. Most child care centers operate only during regular business hours, which is incompatible with the non-traditional schedules of workers in the metro Las Vegas tourism economy.

The financial strain on caregivers is significant, with families shouldering the cost of care, leading to reduced savings, higher debt, and long-term economic instability. Families facing elder care responsibilities face challenges similar to families with children. An AARP study estimates that 53 million Americans, or roughly 450,000 adults in Southern Nevada, provided unpaid care to an adult with health or functional needs. While more accessible than child care, the adult care industry faces similar workforce shortages and exceptionally high costs, resulting in working adults leaving the workforce to care for family members. Women bear the care burden more than men, as a sizable percentage of working-age women have care responsibilities for children and older adults or persons with disabilities.

<sup>1</sup> Southern Nevada is defined as the Las Vegas metropolitan statistical area, which is commensurate with Clark County, Nevada. Throughout this report Las Vegas and Southern Nevada are used interchangeably.



Southern Nevada employers are also adversely impacted, as caregiving responsibilities among employees result in increased absenteeism, turnover, and reduced productivity, particularly in sectors reliant on intensive labor, such as retail and hospitality. These pressures drive up business costs because of recruitment needs and reduced workplace efficiency, negatively impacting profitability and competitiveness. These challenges are more pronounced for smaller businesses, threatening operational sustainability as employees may leave the job market because they cannot pay for child or elder care. Higher costs triggered by employee turnover are then passed to consumers.

The broader healthcare and social service sector is strained as families struggle to access adequate care for elderly or disabled relatives, resulting in poorer health outcomes and increased emergency care costs. This inadequate care infrastructure weakens Southern Nevada's attractiveness as a place to live and work, pushing skilled workers and economic development opportunities to areas with better support systems. Expanding access to quality care services for children, the elderly, and those with disabilities would enhance health outcomes, reduce social disparities, and support caregivers' economic stability. Additionally, as caregiving demand grows with an aging population, the public sector faces an increasing fiscal burden in social services and healthcare. Addressing these systemic care economy issues is crucial to fostering sustainable economic growth and enhancing life quality in Southern Nevada, with potential long-term benefits for families and regional competitiveness.

## Key takeaways:

- Southern Nevada's direct care workforce is 38% lower than the U.S. average and the lowest among peer metros.
- According to the Rand Corporation, family caregivers lose \$522 billion in wages annually, translating to an estimated \$4.6 billion in Southern Nevada based on per capita metrics.
- Because of the low supply of care options and care workers, the economic impact of the direct care sector in Southern Nevada is only \$3.1 billion compared with an expected \$4.5 billion economic impact based on population. The \$1.4 billion difference between the expected and actual size of the direct care economy represents a significant loss to the regional economy.
- At nearly 20%, the cost of child care as a percentage of income is the highest in the United States and among peer metro markets.
- Southern Nevada's current deficits will likely increase in the coming years because of continued population growth and the aging of the regional population.





## Methodology

This independent study commissioned by The Lincy Institute and conducted by Tripp Umbach, a recognized industry expert in assessing the economic and social impact of the healthcare and education sectors on the U.S. economy, evaluates the care economy in Southern Nevada and suggests potential policies to relieve deep-seated structural issues. The care economy encompasses a wide array of services for seniors, children, and persons with disabilities, including those experiencing mental health issues, autism, and substance abuse disorders.<sup>2</sup> Tripp Umbach reviewed existing reports, data, and literature concerning the care economy, regional workforce needs, and relevant policy changes. This foundational research provided the necessary context for understanding the current landscape and identifying gaps in care services for seniors, children, and individuals with disabilities, including those experiencing mental health and substance abuse disorders. Tripp Umbach benchmarked Southern Nevada against six peer regions with demographic similarities to enhance the study—Denver, El Paso, Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City. This comparative analysis provided valuable insights into successful workforce development strategies and policy interventions that could be adapted for Southern Nevada.

Additionally, Tripp Umbach employed economic modeling techniques, such as IMPLAN analysis, to quantify the care economy's direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts on the region. By synthesizing these quantitative data with input from stakeholders, Tripp Umbach produced a comprehensive analysis of the care economy's contributions to job creation, economic growth, and workforce development in Southern Nevada. The study concludes with strategic recommendations to address current gaps, expand workforce capacity, and enhance policy support for the care economy's sustainability.

<sup>2</sup> For this analysis, persons with disabilities are included with all persons needing home care, such as the elderly, who may also have a disability.

# Key Finding #1: The Care Economy in the United States and Southern Nevada Demands Attention

## Economic Impact: Healthcare and Social Services Sector

Healthcare and social services in the United States represent a vast sector, encompassing industries and jobs that provide direct care to adults, children, older people, and individuals with disabilities. The sector accounted for \$3.8 trillion in economic activity in 2023, or approximately 14% of the nation’s \$27.4 trillion economy. Put into perspective, the total monetary value of this sector is slightly smaller than the entire German economy and larger than the economies of the United Kingdom and France.

Southern Nevada’s broader healthcare and social services industry contributes significantly to the region’s economy by providing healthcare and social services to 2.3 million people. In 2023, the sector represented \$18.4 billion, slightly less than 10% of the region’s economy.<sup>3</sup> The sector, which has a workforce of approximately 102,000, has been growing because of increasing demand for healthcare and social assistance, driven by population growth and an aging population.

A location quotient (LQ) measures the concentration of a particular industry or sector in a region compared to the national average. An LQ greater than 1 indicates that the region has a higher concentration in that industry than the national average, while an LQ less than 1 suggests a lower concentration. Southern Nevada’s healthcare and social services sector shows a significant gap compared to national standards. Based on expected values, this sector should contribute approximately \$26.3 billion to the regional economy, but it currently generates \$8.2 billion less than this benchmark. This indicates that nearly one-third of the sector’s potential economic impact is missing from the economy, highlighting a need for investment to meet national standards (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Healthcare and Social Services Sector and Care Economy in the United States and Southern Nevada (2023)

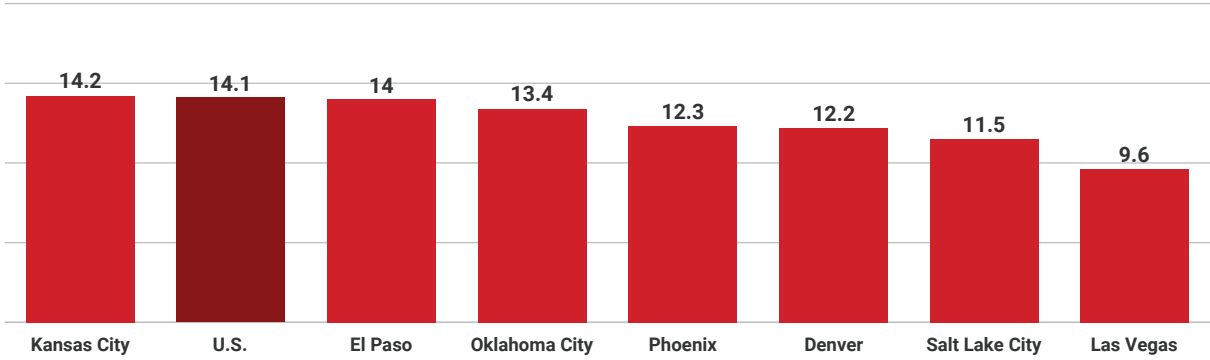
United States (in billions)	Expected in Southern Nevada Based on Population (in billions)	Location Quotient	Estimated Size of Economy in Southern Nevada (in billions)	Missing from the Economy in Southern Nevada (in billions)
\$3,800	\$26.6	0.69	\$18.4	\$8.2

Source: Tripp Umbach

<sup>3</sup> Federal Reserve Bank

Southern Nevada is last among peer metros in the percentage of its total metro economy in the broader healthcare and social service sector, with only Kansas City ranking above the national average in this metric (see Figure 1).

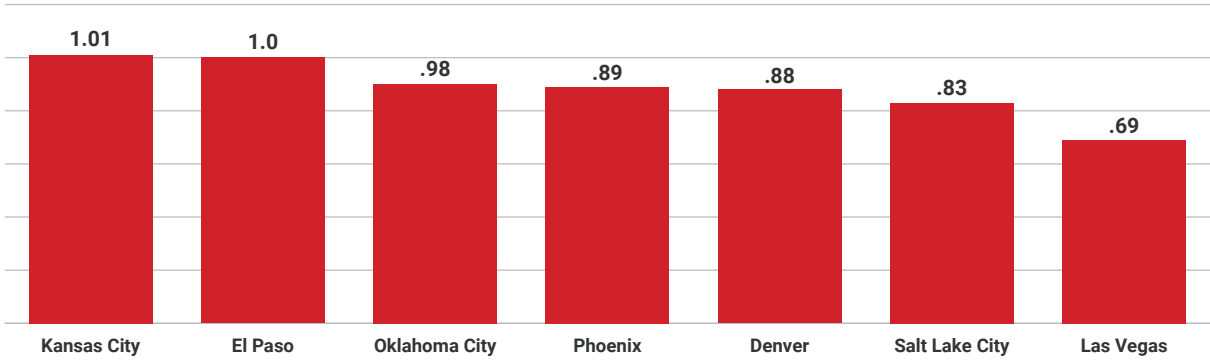
Figure 1: Percentage of Economy in Healthcare and Social Assistance in Southern Nevada and Peer Metros (2023)



Source: DataUSA

Mirroring data presented in Figure 1, the size of the care economy in Southern Nevada is the lowest among peer metros when analyzed with location quotients (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Location Quotients for the Healthcare and Social Assistance Economic Sector in Southern Nevada and Peer Metros (2023)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics





**Employment Impact: Healthcare and Social Services Sector**

The healthcare and social services sector is an essential generator of employment in the United States, with 21.2 million employees in 2023. On a per capita basis, Southern Nevada should have 148,400 jobs in this sector; however, the number of jobs is estimated at 102,300. This indicates that the region is missing 46,100 jobs based on national standards, or about one-third of the expected level of employment.<sup>4</sup> (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Total Direct Jobs in the Healthcare and Social Services Sector and Direct Care Sector in the United States and Southern Nevada (2023)**

United States (in millions)	Expected Jobs in Southern Nevada Based on Population (0.007)	Location Quotient	Estimated Employment in Southern Nevada	Jobs Missing from the Southern Nevada Economy
21.2	148,400	0.69	102,300	46,100

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>4</sup> Dwyer, M., Vong, A., Thymianos, K., Saladino, C. J., Brown, W. E. (2024). Projected Job Growth by 2031 in the Mountain West. Economic Development & Workforce Fact Sheet No. 70 1-5.  
Available at: [https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/bmw\\_lincy\\_econdev/72](https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/bmw_lincy_econdev/72)



## Direct Care Sector

Tripp Umbach estimates that the direct care sector, defined as paid care provided to children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, in Southern Nevada equals approximately \$3.1 billion. By comparison, the direct care sector contributes \$648 billion annually to the U.S. economy and supports 3.6 million direct jobs nationally. However, because of the relative size of the direct care economy compared with the U.S. average, the care economy in Southern Nevada is only 69% as large as expected, or \$1.4 billion lower than expected based on location quotients.<sup>5</sup> (see Table 3).

**Table 3. The Direct Care Sector in the United States and Southern Nevada, 2023**

United States (in billions)	Expected in Southern Nevada Based on Population (0.007) (in billions)	Location Quotient	Estimated Size of Economy in Southern Nevada (in billions)	Missing from the Economy in Southern Nevada (in billions)
\$648	\$4.5	0.69	\$3.1	\$1.4

Source: Tripp Umbach

A detailed breakdown of the direct care sector indicates that the economic impact of child care workers is the lowest relative to other types of caregivers and generates the most significant adverse effect on economic development (see Table 4).

**Table 4. Economic Impact Estimate of the Direct Care Sector in Southern Nevada (2023)**

	Expected Economic Impact Southern Nevada Based on Population (in billions)	Location Quotient	Estimated Economic Impact in Southern Nevada (in billions)	Dollars Missing from the Southern Nevada Economy (in billions)
<b>Child Care</b>	\$0.96	0.62	\$0.59	\$0.31
<b>Home Care</b>	\$1.76	0.69	\$1.22	\$0.54
<b>Other*</b>	\$1.78	0.73	\$1.29	\$0.49
<b>Total Direct Care Sector</b>	<b>\$4.5</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>\$3.1</b>	<b>\$1.4</b>

\* Adult day care, community-based care workers.

Source: Tripp Umbach

<sup>5</sup> Using location quotients to demonstrate the variance between regions and the United States, Tripp Umbach estimated the size of the personal care sector in Southern Nevada at \$4.5 billion (assuming a location quotient of 1.0).

## Employment Impact: Direct Care Sector

In 2023, Southern Nevada employed approximately 17,400 workers in the direct care sector, including child care, elder care, home health aides, and other direct care roles. Nationally, the direct care sector employed 3.6 million employees in 2023. However, on a per capita basis, Southern Nevada should have 25,200 jobs in this sector; the employment is estimated at 17,400. This indicates that the region is missing 7,800 direct care jobs, or 31% of the total, based on national standards (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Total Direct Jobs in the Healthcare and Social Services Sector and Direct Care Sector in the United States and Southern Nevada (2023)**

	United States (jobs in millions)	Expected Jobs in Southern Nevada Based on Population (0.007)	Location Quotient	Estimated Jobs in Southern Nevada	Jobs Missing from the Southern Nevada Economy
<b>Child Care</b>	0.76	5,330	0.62	3,305	2,025
<b>Home Care</b>	1.40	9,800	0.69	6,760	3,040
<b>Other*</b>	1.44	10,070	0.73	7,335	2,735
<b>Total Direct Care Sector</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>25,200</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>17,400</b>	<b>7,800</b>

\* Adult day care, community-based care workers.

Source: Tripp Umbach

The direct care sector, defined as jobs for children, older adults, and persons with disabilities, represents approximately 17% of the healthcare and social services sector. However, only one in every 69 employed persons in Southern Nevada works in direct care professions.

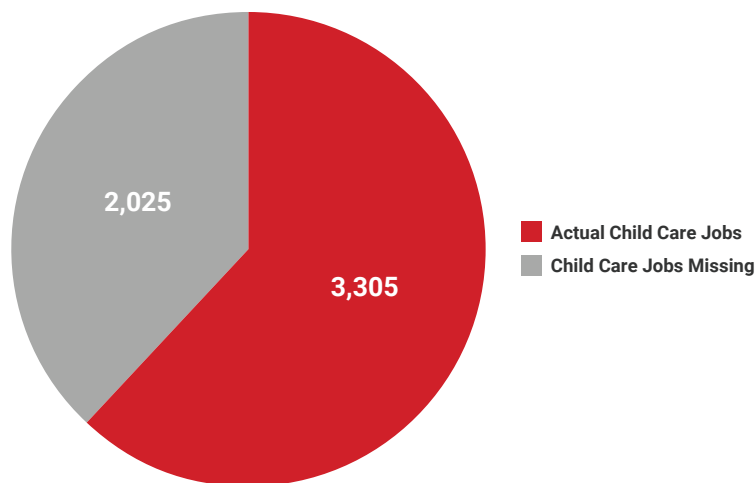
## Child Care Sector

Child care represents less than 4% of the healthcare and social services workforce and only 28% of Southern Nevada's direct care workforce. Based on a national average, Southern Nevada should have 6% of this workforce engaged in child care. In contrast, the home care industry is more developed, resulting in fewer working-age adults needing to leave employment to care for older adults and persons with disabilities.

The child care market is a decentralized patchwork of providers caring for children in homes, centers, and schools. At the same time, parents can choose care options; supply and demand factors in the market lead to a persistent gap between the cost of providing high-quality care and prices that families can afford. Businesses also struggle to invest in quality improvements such as increased compensation for staff or lower child-to-educator ratios while charging rates that families can afford.

Economically, direct child care represents the weakest link in the care economy and must be addressed by state and local policymakers. The issues are profound and complex. Nationally, demand for child care has increased while the workforce has experienced significant declines, with an average annual growth of **negative** 17%, representing 917,229 jobs in 2014 to only 761,420 jobs in 2023. Based on location quotient, the Southern Nevada child care industry is 38% as large as expected, resulting in only 3,305 workers in child care centers and home-based providers (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Number of Child Care Jobs Missing in Southern Nevada (2023)**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics





## **Key Finding #2: Low Pay in the Direct Care Sector Holds Back Economic Growth**

Despite recent progress in increasing the minimum wage in Nevada, low pay for care workers negatively impacts the care economy in Southern Nevada. The direct care sector, which includes home health aides, child care providers, and child care workers, is essential in supporting vulnerable populations. Yet, these workers are paid among the lowest wages nationally, leading to high rates of turnover because of widespread financial insecurity. Nationally, the median salary for care workers remains 30% below a livable income. High turnover caused by low wages results in a shortage of qualified care workers, leaving many families without consistent or adequate care.

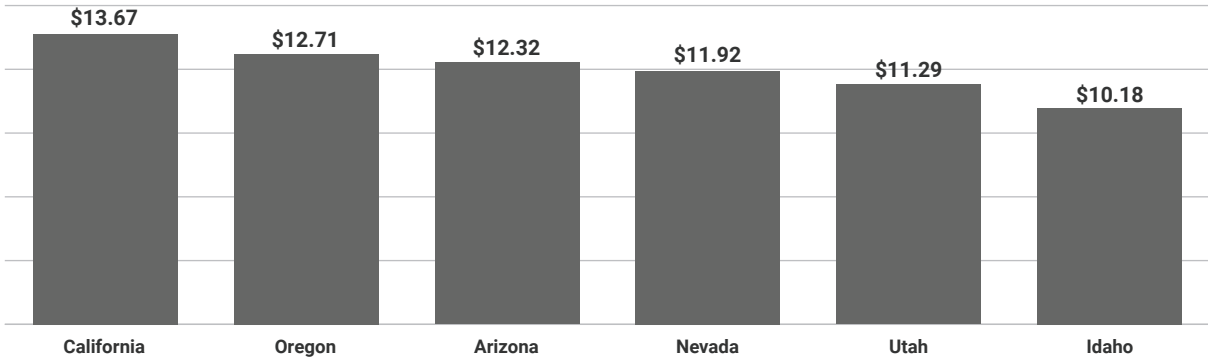
While the demand for direct care workers continues to rise, low wages remain a significant barrier to filling these roles, limiting the growth and sustainability of this essential workforce. In Southern Nevada, where there are 6,760 paid home care workers, the occupation has seen 62% growth over the past decade. Despite this impressive growth, the sector faces high turnover, creating an estimated 3,220 job openings annually, or two openings for every position filled.

Low wages and a high rate of part-time work make it financially challenging for direct care workers to support themselves and their families. The median annual income for direct care workers across the United States is \$23,688, leaving many workers below 200% of the federal poverty level. Approximately 39% of direct care workers live in low-income households, while 46% rely on public assistance programs such as Medicaid, food assistance, or cash aid. This reliance on public assistance highlights the sector's lack of financial support and stability.

Additionally, the direct care workforce is predominantly composed of women and people of color, further reflecting and perpetuating racial and gender inequities in earnings and job security. Without significant improvements in wages and benefits, Nevada's home care industry risks losing more workers to higher-paying roles. In contrast, others may be forced to rely on unpaid family caregivers to meet the growing need for care. This trend limits the availability of trained home care professionals and strains Nevada's labor force as family members leave employment to fill these caregiving gaps, further emphasizing the urgency to address wage disparities in the direct care industry.

In 2023, U.S. child care workers earned an average of \$9.63 per hour, \$11.96 less than the average national hourly pay of \$21.59. However, the annual wage for child care workers in Nevada is slightly higher than the national average, at \$11.92, because of more robust labor union participation in the industry. This places Nevada in the middle of the among neighboring states (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Median Hourly Wage for Child Care Working in Nevada and Neighboring States**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The strain on caregivers is also reflected in their health outcomes. Around 39% of caregivers report high levels of emotional stress, while 17% report physical strain, often leading to chronic health conditions. The mental and physical toll on caregivers, coupled with financial stress, can lead to higher healthcare costs for caregivers themselves, placing an additional strain on public health systems. This cycle of caregiving burden, workforce loss, and economic hardship underscores the urgent need for investment in Southern Nevada’s care economy. Without significant improvements in care infrastructure—such as affordable child care, elder care, and support for caregivers—these challenges will continue to hinder economic growth, widen social inequalities, and burden families and the regional economy. Addressing these issues should be a priority for Southern Nevada’s policymakers, as doing so would alleviate the personal economic burdens caregivers face and unlock broader economic potential by enabling more people, particularly women, to fully participate in the workforce.

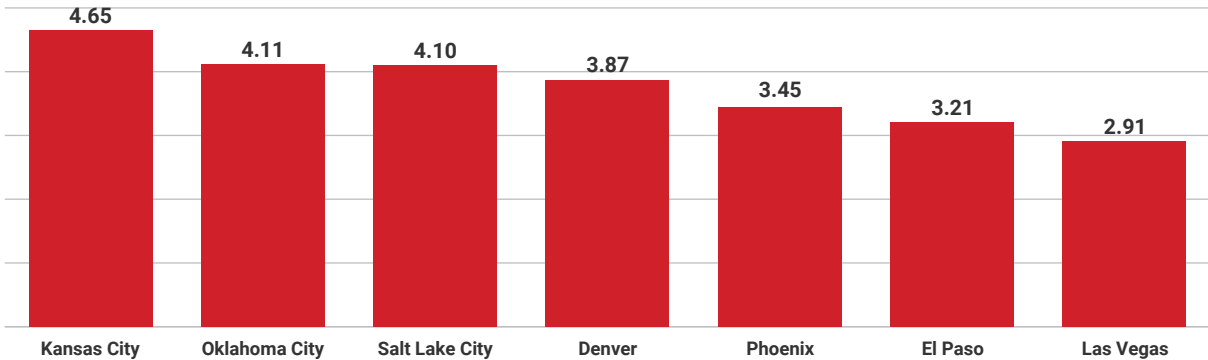
### Key Finding #3: Southern Nevada Faces Low Availability and High Costs for Care

A severe shortage of care workers in Southern Nevada is hindering the state’s economic growth as families struggle to find adequate care for their children, older adults, and persons with disabilities. This issue limits workforce participation and economic development, especially related to child care. Low-income families are burdened with childcare costs when they can least afford it, especially early in parents’ careers when incomes are low and they are saddled with other significant expenses like mortgages and student loans. Because of cost and other access issues, low-income households have the most difficulty finding care. More than 70% of households with incomes under \$40,000 who searched for child care reported trouble finding it. While many lower-income households would likely qualify for subsidized care, capacity constraints often mean that participation among eligible families is low. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that only one in six children eligible for care benefits received them.

According to a February 2023 “Child Care Policy Report” prepared by the Office of Workforce Innovation for the Nevada Governor’s Workforce Development Board’s Childcare Working Group, every Nevada county is considered a “child care desert.” The report indicated that nearly three-quarters (74%) of children 5 or younger do not have access to licensed child care. In addition, the Nevada Child Care Fund campaign strives to raise awareness about expanded subsidies for families, including households earning up to \$70,000 annually. However, despite these financial resources, the demand for care far exceeds the available supply of providers.

Tripp Umbach evaluated peer markets and found that Southern Nevada ranked last among its peers in the number of direct care employees. The care economy in Southern Nevada is understaffed in all areas as the number of workers in healthcare and social service professions per capita is lowest compared with peer markets (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Healthcare Industry Employment Per 1,000 Residents in Southern Nevada and Peer Metros



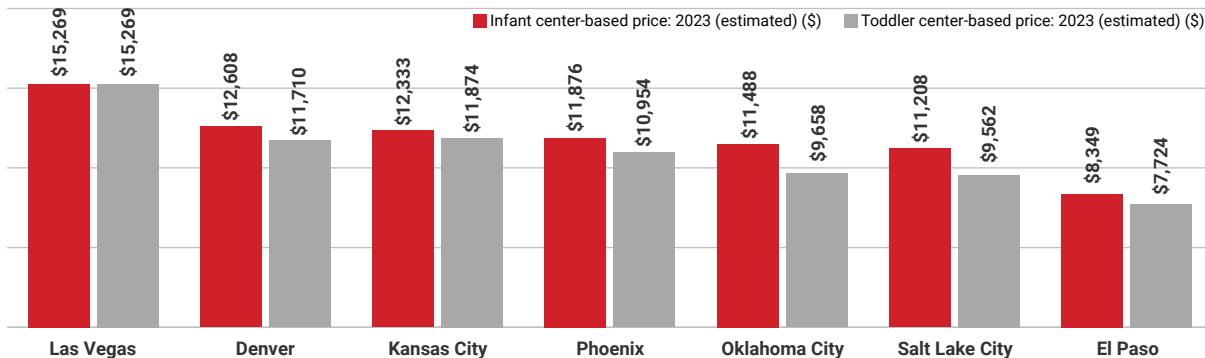
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



## Child Care Costs

Child care costs in the United States are a significant economic barrier to care for most individuals and families. The average cost of center-based child care for infants ranges from \$10,000 to \$16,000 per year, depending on the state, with some states seeing costs as high as \$20,000 annually. The average annual cost of infant care in Southern Nevada is approximately \$15,000, making it a substantial expense for families. For a family with two children, this represents nearly 25% of the state's median household income. Southern Nevada has the highest child care costs among peer metros, representing approximately 30% more annually than the average of the six peers (see Figure 6).

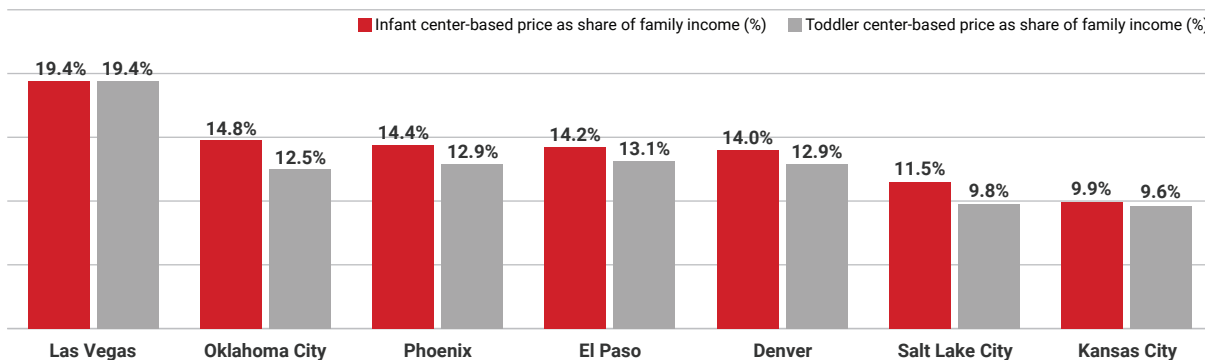
**Figure 6: Annual Child Care Costs for Infant and Toddlers (2023)**



Source: U.S. Census

High child care costs in Southern Nevada translate into a higher percentage of wages directed toward child care. At nearly 20%, the cost of child care as a percentage of income is the highest in the United States and among peer markets (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Percentage of Family Income Directed to Child Care in Southern Nevada and Peer Metros**



Source: U.S. Census

## **Key Finding #4: The Burden of Low Availability and High Costs of Care is Borne by Families**

### **The Unpaid Care Sector**

According to an AARP estimate, about 53 million U.S. adults provide unpaid care for loved ones. This equates to approximately 370,000 people in Southern Nevada. According to the AARP Public Policy Institute, the economic value of unpaid caregiving for older adults and individuals with disabilities is estimated to be \$470 billion per year. Southern Nevada's unpaid caregivers for older and adults with disabilities represent a monetary value of \$3.3 billion annually. Therefore, in 2023, the economic value of unpaid care was higher than that of the entire paid care industry.

### **Reduction in Workforce Participation**

In 2023, 6.6 million people, mostly women, left the workforce when forced to decide between caring for their families and paid work.<sup>6</sup> The excessive amount of unpaid care work women perform often prevents them from earning a paid income, contributing to more significant gender inequities. Tripp Umbach estimates from national averages that approximately 46,200 people in Southern Nevada are unemployed because of care responsibilities and limited access to available and affordable solutions. Having children reduces women's employment rates, especially in households with younger children. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics analysis of Current Population Survey data,<sup>7</sup> the labor force participation gap between men and women with young children remains significant, especially in households with children under 5 years old. Men in households with young children are 39% more likely to be in the workforce than women, highlighting the impact of childcare responsibilities on women's employment. These data underscore the disproportionate impact of childcare responsibilities on women, particularly those with very young children.

### **Supply of Child Care Facilities**

There has long been a shortage of accessible and affordable child care centers in the United States. The COVID-19 pandemic magnified this issue when public health issues forced 16,000 child care centers to close their doors, and many providers had to operate at limited capacity. According to a U.S. Chamber of Commerce study, many of these centers never reopened.

Because of workforce shortages and high costs, the caregiving landscape is dominated by family members who provide unpaid assistance to their loved ones, often because they have no other options. Managing care for loved ones involves trade-offs between time and cost, significantly affecting employment decisions for Southern Nevada residents. Families with young children, single and working parents, or households with two working parents are most likely to use paid child care. These costs comprise a substantial portion of family budgets, often equating to 50-70% of housing costs.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the CPS

Elder Care

Paid caregivers are simply too expensive for most families, and the home care workforce shortage means they are unavailable to many families, even for families who can afford these services. While costs vary by state, the estimated national median cost for 2024 is \$25,440 per year for adult healthcare to \$120,304 per year for a private room in a nursing home. The annual cost for nursing home care in Nevada in 2024, at \$153,204, is more than 25% higher than the national average.<sup>8</sup>

Across the United States, millions of individuals provide unpaid care for their loved ones, from aging parents to disabled family members. According to the AARP’s “Caregiving in the United States 2020” report, about 53 million Americans provided unpaid care to an adult with health or functional needs. AARP estimates that in 2021, family caregivers provided 36 billion hours of care valued at \$600 billion. When adjusted for inflation, the value of providing uncompensated care is roughly \$723 billion in 2024. These numbers grossly underestimate the total value as they are based on \$16 per hour for care, significantly lower than the loss of wages for the average caregiver.

Child Care

Southern Nevada faces critical challenges within its care economy, as highlighted by a recent Annie E. Casey Foundation analysis. The state ranks near the bottom in child and family well-being, largely because of significant gaps in child care. Nevada’s child care costs are the highest in the nation, with married couples spending 15% and single parents allocating 38% of their incomes on care. This financial burden deepens wealth disparities, particularly affecting single parents, low-income families, and communities of color, often limiting their employment, educational opportunities, and credit scores. Child care providers also struggle with maintaining their workforce because of low wages, restrictive student-teacher ratios, and capacity limits, resulting in long waitlists for families. Advocates warn that without access to affordable and quality child care, parents, particularly women, face difficulties maintaining employment, contributing to broader economic challenges. Nevada ranks near the bottom among all states in terms of children’s financial health and community support provided to children (see Table 6).

Table 6: Health of Children in Nevada vs. United States, 2024

Nevada Rankings Among 50 States for the Health of Children				
Overall	Financial	Education	Health	Community Support
47th	45th	46th	42nd	45th

Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation 2024

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.seniorliving.org/nursing-homes/costs/>



## Key Finding #5: The Underdeveloped Care Economy in Southern Nevada Has Significant Negative Economic and Social Costs

An underperforming care economy in Southern Nevada carries significant economic and social costs, disrupting both families and the broader economy. One of the most pressing issues is the lack of affordable child care, which forces more than 25% of young parents to leave the workforce. This mirrors a national trend where child care expenses force more than one in four parents in the United States to quit their jobs or leave educational programs. This leads to severe financial instability, reduced lifetime earnings, and diminished family wealth-building opportunities. The caregiving crisis contributes to a broader “early years crisis” across the United States, where 68% of parents struggle to afford child care. These financial pressures force families to make difficult decisions, such as cutting back on essential expenses like food or taking on additional jobs, exacerbating financial strain.

In Southern Nevada, the lack of care infrastructure is a significant barrier to workforce participation, particularly among women, who are more likely to scale back on paid work or leave the workforce entirely because of caregiving responsibilities. This situation stifles economic development by reducing the available labor pool, particularly in industries that rely heavily on female workers, such as healthcare, education, and hospitality, all of which are crucial to the Southern Nevada economy. Nationally, caregiving responsibilities reduce women’s lifetime earnings by an average of 15%, or approximately \$295,000, severely limiting their ability to save for retirement and eroding financial security. This economic burden is compounded in marginalized communities, especially for Black women, who are more likely to reduce their employment, often because of financial necessity.

Nationally, one-third of adults providing unpaid care are unemployed, and many others work part-time, reducing household income and economic stability. According to the Rand Corporation, family caregivers lose \$522 billion in wages annually, translating to \$4.6 billion in Southern Nevada based on per capita metrics.



## Workforce Impact

About 56% of U.S. workers, or roughly 90 million people, have care responsibilities outside of their full-time jobs, according to a survey of more than 3,600 employed caregivers conducted by Boston Consulting Group (more commonly known as BCG). Approximately 40 million of these caregivers rely on paid care such as nannies, daycares, or nursing homes to go to work. When paid care is unavailable or too expensive, they risk missing work or leaving their paid jobs altogether. In the United States, 68% of parents struggle to meet child care costs, and two-thirds have had to make significant financial changes, such as taking on additional work or cutting back on essential expenses, including their children’s food.

The remaining 50 million workers rely on unpaid care, including family, friends, and neighbors, or do it themselves while attempting to keep their jobs. This equates to the approximately 350,000 workers in Southern Nevada struggling to figure out care responsibilities while holding down a job.

Tripp Umbach estimates that the average worker in Southern Nevada has a \$98,371 impact on the state’s economy.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the 630,000 workers with care responsibilities have a combined annual economic impact of \$61.9 billion on the Southern Nevada economy. Further, the 350,000 workers who rely on unpaid care have a combined annual economic impact of \$34.4 billion on the state’s economy (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Economic Impact on Southern Nevada of Persons with Care Responsibilities (2023)**

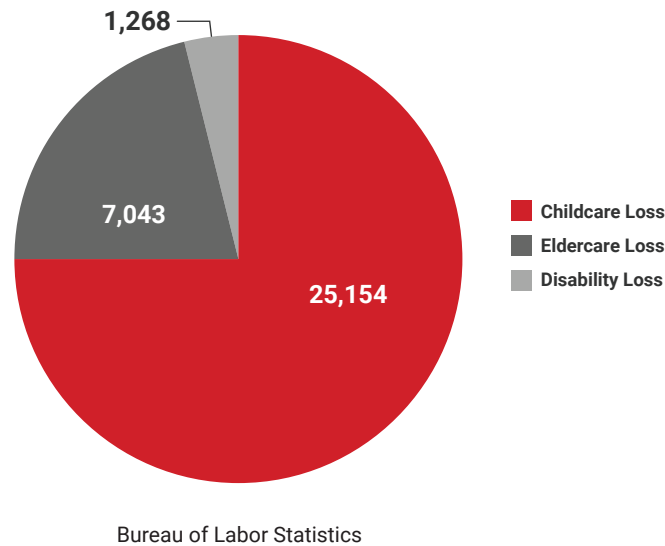
Workers	United States	Southern Nevada Workforce	Economic Impact on Southern Nevada
Having Care Responsibilities	90 million	630,000	\$61.9 billion
Pay for Care	40 million	280,000	\$27.5 billion
Unpaid Care (family, friends, or provide while working)	50 million	350,000	\$34.4 billion

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>9</sup> Based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

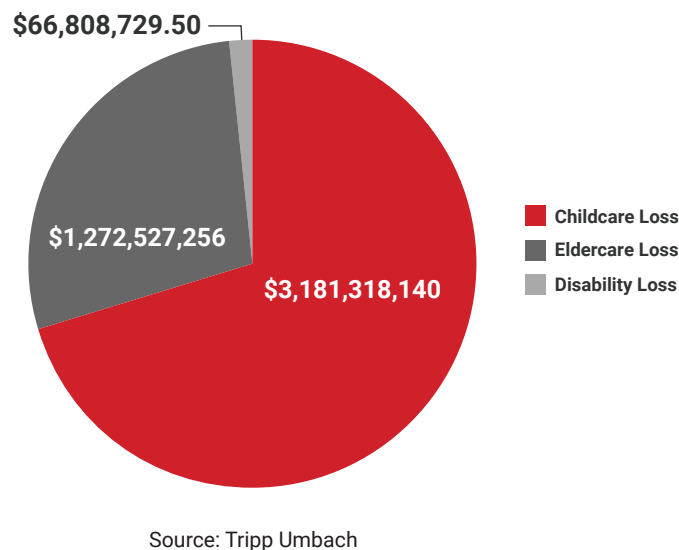
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 6.6 million people indicated that they are not in the labor force because of care responsibilities, equating to approximately 42,600 Southern Nevada workers when measured per capita. Tripp Umbach estimates that of the 42,600 workers in Southern Nevada missing, more than 70%, or approximately 30,400, are absent from the workforce because of child care responsibilities. An additional 7,300 are missing because of elder care responsibilities, and the remaining 4,900 are for caring for a person with a disability (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Estimated Reduction in the Southern Nevada Workforce Because of Care Responsibilities**



The loss of 46,200 workers represents a \$4.5 billion reduction in regional GNP, or one in every 35 dollars (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Estimated Loss to the Southern Nevada Economy Because of Care Responsibilities**



While staggering, these figures underestimate the actual economic loss to the regional economy, as other metrics indicate that the region faces higher workforce shortages, higher costs, and less access to social and community services. Further, these figures account for only persons who have already left the economy because of a lack of access to affordable care options. As indicated above, 350,000 Southern Nevada workers rely on unpaid care, representing a \$34.5 billion risk to the economy annually if these workers drop out of the workforce.



## Impact on Businesses

The economic impact of caregiving extends beyond individual caregivers and their families, affecting businesses and communities. Employees who struggle to balance caregiving and work are less productive, which can lead to decreased profitability for businesses. According to a Harvard Business School report, “The Caring Company: How Employers Can Help Employees Manage Their Caregiving Responsibilities,” companies face two hidden caregiving costs: turnover and productivity loss. Turnover involves recruiting and replacing employees who leave or lose knowledge and hiring temporary employees to cover for absent employees. Productivity loss includes employees being absent or distracted and others having to pick up their workload.

U.S. businesses lose an estimated \$33.6 billion annually because of lost productivity from caregiving responsibilities. In Southern Nevada, these losses, estimated at \$235.2 million, reflect higher employee turnover, reduced efficiency, and increased recruitment and training costs for local businesses. Employers in the region face significant challenges as caregiving responsibilities pull workers away from their jobs, increasing absenteeism and decreasing productivity. In Southern Nevada, where tourism, service, and retail industries are major economic drivers, the financial burden of caregiving poses an even greater risk, as these sectors rely heavily on a stable, reliable workforce.





## **Key Finding #6: Economic and Social Benefits of Investing in a Strong Care Economy**

The care economy is also an untapped source of opportunities for job creation, income generation, and social mobility. In 2022, the World Economic Forum projected that investing in social service sector jobs, including those in the paid direct care sector, could yield triple rewards in terms of GDP returns, well-paid jobs created, and social mobility. Modeling a \$1.3 trillion investment in the United States resulted in a \$3.1 trillion GDP return, affecting job creation of 10 million jobs in the social sector and 1 million in other sectors.<sup>10</sup>

Investing in affordable, high-quality child care has significant long-term benefits. Research shows that early childhood education supports brain development and better prepares children for success in school and life. The availability of such programs also attracts homebuyers and increases property values, providing economic benefits for the entire community. Creating affordable child care options in Southern Nevada is a social necessity and a strategic investment that can help retain young parents in the workforce, support local businesses, and enhance the region's overall economic prosperity.

While the benefits of high-quality child care extend to society, the financial burden is primarily borne by individual families. Extensive literature links increased maternal labor supply to access to child care. This improves outcomes for mothers affected and enlarges the labor pool, broadly benefiting local businesses and the economy.

Indicative of benefits for businesses, private companies are increasingly providing child care benefits to their workers to retain talent and reduce absenteeism at work. Affordable, high-quality child care is critical to keeping employees in the workforce, with 88% of small business owners agreeing that it improves employee retention. Addressing the lack of child care could also help close the skills gap, especially in manufacturing. Federal funding for child care programs, which exceeds state and local investments, could provide high returns, with up to \$7.30 generated for every dollar invested. Moreover, investment in early childhood education can increase property values and attract homebuyers, further enhancing economic growth.

Investments in quality child care produce enormous returns for children. The long-run benefits associated with high-quality early educational experiences mean that the return on these types of investments is often high: Estimates of the long-run find a \$7 to \$12 return on every \$1 invested. Investments in quality care support children's healthy development and early learning from birth, which leads to longer-term benefits for individuals and families that can spill over to their communities and the economy more broadly. The research literature has thoroughly and rigorously demonstrated the long-term, positive effects of child care programs on outcomes such as educational attainment, employment, and earnings.

<sup>10</sup> World Economic Forum (2022). Jobs of Tomorrow: The Triple Returns of Social Jobs in the Economic Recovery. Weforum.org. [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Jobs\\_of\\_Tomorrow\\_2022.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Jobs_of_Tomorrow_2022.pdf)

## **Key Finding #7: Southern Nevada Leaders Recognize the Importance of Strengthening the Care Economy**

Addressing underlying issues in the broken care economy is becoming a high priority in Southern Nevada, as the lack of affordable care options affects individual families and contributes to broader economic prosperity. A recent poll by the Program for Public Consultation at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy reveals that a bipartisan majority of Nevadans support policies to assist families with rising child care costs. The survey, which included responses from Democrats and Republicans, shows strong backing for increasing child tax credits, expanding universal preschool programs, subsidizing child care for low- and middle-income families, and establishing a national 12-week paid family and medical leave program.

Notably, 73% of respondents favor raising the child tax credit to \$3,600, reflecting the positive impact of similar pandemic-era credits that reduced child poverty by a third. Additionally, 80% support federal funding for universal preschool, and 77% back a policy to limit family spending on child care to 7% of income for low- and middle-income households. With Nevada ranking as the state with the highest child care costs relative to income, these proposals could alleviate significant financial strain on families. Finally, 70% of respondents support creating a federal paid family leave program, highlighting widespread recognition of the need for policies that help working families in the state.

Nevada's care economy has faced significant challenges because of low wages and inadequate benefits for home care workers, but recent legislative strides have aimed to address these issues. For nearly a decade, the average pay for home care workers remained stagnant at around \$11 per hour, a rate that left many workers struggling with financial insecurity. In response, SEIU Local 1107 successfully advocated for a legislative change in 2023, which raised the minimum wage for home care workers to \$16 per hour. While a positive step, this wage increase has not fully addressed the state's 17,410 direct care workers' economic pressures. Many of these workers, who are predominantly women and people of color, continue to face challenges such as the lack of benefits, paid time off, and housing insecurity. In response, SEIU has set a new goal of increasing the minimum wage to \$20 per hour, which would be achievable through adjusting the Medicaid reimbursement rate for employers.

The creation of the Home Care Employment Standards Board has been key to improving conditions for all workers in the industry. This board, established through grassroots efforts, made recommendations that led to wage increases and better working conditions. State leaders have been instrumental in these efforts, recognizing the vital role home care workers play in allowing seniors and people with disabilities to live independently while also saving public funds by reducing reliance on Medicaid-funded nursing homes. Nevada's continued efforts to raise wages and support direct care workers are vital to the future of its care economy and the broader economic well-being of the state. Other policy priorities for SEIU include increasing the number of client service hours for those who need it, improving training quality and opportunities for home care workers, and addressing employee misclassification issues.

Despite this progress, Nevada remains one of the lowest spenders per capita on home and community-based services, ranking 43rd in the nation. The state's rapidly aging population, coupled with a high turnover rate in the care workforce, with 50% of workers leaving within their first year, exacerbates the shortage of care providers. Public support for further wage increases is high, with 85% of Nevadans favoring higher wages for home care workers and 88% supporting benefits like medical insurance and paid sick days.

## Policy Recommendations

To strengthen the Southern Nevada care economy, policymakers must focus on workforce development, affordable child care, and comprehensive care solutions. Affordable direct care is essential for economic stability, particularly for working parents. Southern Nevada can replicate successful models from states like Kentucky by providing child care subsidies and tax incentives for employer-sponsored child care and developing child care hubs connected to public transportation. Addressing regulatory barriers and creating flexible licensing pathways will alleviate workforce shortages, especially for immigrant and out-of-state workers.

To strengthen the Southern Nevada care economy, policies should focus on improving compensation and support for early direct care workers, as this segment is essential to the region's prosperity. This includes direct public funding to ensure living wages, healthcare, and safe working environments for early educators in both center- and home-based settings. Establishing wage and benefit standards that reflect job role, experience, and education, adjusted regularly for the cost of living and education levels, can help address wage inequities and achieve parity with similarly qualified workers in other industries. This will foster a more resilient and sustainable economy in Nevada that enhances family well-being and alleviates workforce shortage.

Collaboration with institutions such as the College of Southern Nevada, Roseman University, the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV, and Nevada State University to establish child care, home health, and elder care training programs can address critical workforce shortages. Apprenticeships and skill-development programs, combined with higher wages, healthcare benefits, and student loan forgiveness, will attract workers and reduce high turnover rates in the industry.

Investment in infrastructure, such as age-friendly housing and community-based elder care, is crucial for enabling seniors to age at home, lessening the demand for costly institutional care. Expanding telehealth and remote monitoring can also help bridge gaps in elder care, especially in rural areas. Nevada should build on models proposed by the Governor's Workforce Development Board, including child care hubs, tax incentives for employer-sponsored care, and partnerships with nonprofits.





Finally, Nevada should promote caregiver advocacy councils and awareness campaigns to strengthen community engagement and inform policy decisions. By taking these steps, Southern Nevada can address workforce shortages, expand access to essential services, and lay the foundation for a sustainable, inclusive care economy that meets the needs of its rapidly growing population. To move Southern Nevada forward in strengthening its care economy, several key steps must be prioritized to address workforce shortages, expand access to care, and improve infrastructure for the benefit of the region's current 2.3 million residents and future growth:

- **Expand Access to Affordable Child Care and Elder Care:** Nevada can make care services more affordable by subsidizing child care and elder care for low- and middle-income families, allowing more parents and caregivers to remain in the workforce. Incentivizing employer-provided child care through tax credits and investing in state-funded pre-K programs can improve early childhood education. Similarly, increased investment in home-based elder care services will help seniors age in place, reducing reliance on costly institutional care.
- **Strengthen the Care Workforce:** Improving wages and benefits for care workers is essential to attracting and retaining talent. Raising the minimum wage, offering paid leave, and providing healthcare coverage will improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover. Workforce development programs, apprenticeships, and continuous professional development are necessary to equip care workers with the skills to fill critical nursing, home healthcare, and elder care labor shortages. Expanding community health worker programs and volunteer peer support networks can supplement formal care services, particularly in underserved areas. These networks can assist with tasks like transportation and companionship, improving the quality of life for vulnerable populations.
- **Enhance Support for Unpaid Caregivers:** Nevada legislators can alleviate the financial strain on unpaid family caregivers by offering stipends and tax credits and expanding respite care services. Providing caregiver training on dementia care and home safety will improve care quality and prevent caregiver burnout.
- **Improve Healthcare Access and Infrastructure:** Expanding Medicaid to cover long-term and home-based care will ensure more low-income seniors and disabled individuals receive the necessary support. Continued expansion of telehealth services, particularly in rural areas, and public-private partnerships to build care infrastructure like senior care facilities and community health centers will also enhance access to care.
- **Encourage Innovation in Care Delivery:** Nevada can lead innovation in the care economy by promoting technology integration in care services, such as telehealth and assistive technologies. Establishing care hubs that bring together child care, elder care, and healthcare services can improve accessibility and efficiency. Additionally, exploring value-based payment models will incentivize long-term, preventive care.
- **Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns:** Raising public awareness about the care economy is essential to promote community engagement and highlight the importance of caregiving. Creating caregiver advocacy councils can help inform policy decisions and develop supportive programs.

Ultimately, the care economy is essential to Southern Nevada's overall prosperity, with the region's growing population and diverse needs requiring comprehensive and coordinated policy efforts. Nevada can improve family well-being, reduce workforce shortages, and create a more resilient economy that benefits all its residents by investing in care services and the workers who provide them.



## Conclusion

The economic impact of caregiving in Southern Nevada cannot remain hidden from sight. Challenges can be addressed only by recognizing and valuing caregivers' essential economic role in the region. Southern Nevada's \$3.1 billion direct care economy falls short of the \$4.5 billion expected for its population, reflecting a \$1.4 billion gap that stifles regional economic potential. Unpaid family caregivers, constrained by limited formal care options, forgo \$4.6 billion in wages annually in the area. Consequently, every \$1 in Southern Nevada's formal care economy is reduced by \$1.45 in lost wages to families, particularly among working-age women.

Additionally, the region bears the highest direct care costs as a percentage of income compared to neighboring states and peer cities. In contrast, the size of its direct care workforce remains notably lower than national and regional averages. This undersupply of affordable care options and care workers compounds the economic impact, placing strain on the workforce and regional growth.

This report calls for policy changes to support direct caregivers in our communities and work together to create a more equitable and sustainable workforce. By 2040, Nevada can be a national leader in stimulating a dynamic and inclusive care economy, where innovative policies and investments have transformed the state's workforce, healthcare, and social infrastructure. Through bold, forward-thinking actions, Nevada can cultivate a thriving care ecosystem that enhances the lives of all Nevadans—young and old, caregivers and recipients—while driving sustainable economic growth.



## Appendix A: Successful Programs Nationally in the Mountain West

Many states and regions have implemented successful programs to tackle challenges within the care economy, particularly in workforce development, wage improvement, and accessibility of care services.

### National Examples

#### California's In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program

**Program Overview:** California's IHSS program provides funding for low-income elderly and disabled individuals to hire caregivers, often family members, to assist them with daily living activities. The state also offers a tiered pay scale, health benefits, and union rights for IHSS caregivers.

**Impact:** This approach supports the caregiving workforce by formalizing pay and benefits, reducing the financial burden on family caregivers, and allowing many to continue participating in the labor market. By making it easier for family members to take on caregiving roles without sacrificing their livelihoods, California's IHSS program has helped support the elderly and disabled population while providing more stability for caregivers.

**Key Takeaway:** Programs that provide structured support and fair compensation for family caregivers can mitigate caregiver burnout and maintain family income stability, which is crucial for regions with high caregiver demand.

#### Kentucky's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and Wage Supplement Programs

**Program Overview:** Kentucky's CCAP program subsidizes child care for low-income families, but the state has also implemented a wage supplement program for child care workers. The wage supplement provides additional compensation based on their tenure and education.

**Impact:** The wage supplement has successfully stabilized the child care workforce by offering higher earnings to qualified professionals. The CCAP program has also helped make child care affordable for families, allowing more parents to stay in the workforce and improving children's early education outcomes.

**Key Takeaway:** Wage supplements for child care workers and child care assistance for families comprehensively address demand and supply issues within the child care sector.

#### Massachusetts' Paid Family and Medical Leave Program

**Program Overview:** Massachusetts provides paid family and medical leave through a state insurance program. Up to 26 weeks of paid leave is available for individuals needing to care for a family member or their health.

**Impact:** Paid leave allows caregivers to take necessary time off without risking their financial stability, reducing burnout and turnover in care roles. This initiative has supported family caregivers and enabled more individuals to take on caregiving roles without losing income.

**Key Takeaway:** State-funded paid family leave programs can provide critical support to caregivers, reducing burnout and financial strain and supporting retention in formal and informal care roles.

## Minnesota's Senior LinkAge Line

**Program Overview:** Minnesota's Senior LinkAge Line is a statewide service that provides free information, referrals, and assistance to older adults and caregivers regarding services, housing, and benefits. This resource is a central point for caregivers to access resources, training, and support.

**Impact:** The LinkAge Line has successfully helped caregivers navigate the complexities of the care system, reducing their stress and allowing them to access necessary services more efficiently. The program also supports a broader network of community-based organizations that offer direct care services.

**Key Takeaway:** Centralized support lines and resource networks for caregivers improve access to necessary services and reduce barriers, especially for family caregivers who need streamlined support.

## New York's Home Care Worker Wage Parity Law

**Program Overview:** In 2011, New York enacted a wage parity law for home care workers in Medicaid-funded programs to address low wages in the direct care workforce. The law mandates minimum wage and benefit standards above the state minimum wage for direct care workers in New York City and surrounding counties.

**Impact:** By setting a higher minimum compensation, New York has stabilized workforce turnover rates and helped ensure workers receive fair wages. This model has inspired other states to consider similar policies to retain direct care workers and prevent burnout, benefiting care recipients and improving quality.

**Key Takeaway:** State-level wage parity legislation that mandates a livable wage can improve retention in direct care sectors and could be adapted in other regions to reduce wage disparity and turnover.

## Washington's Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Act

**Program Overview:** Washington State created the first public long-term care insurance program, the Washington Cares Fund, which provides residents with financial support for long-term care. Funded through a small payroll tax, the program covers home care services, assisted living, and nursing home costs.

**Impact:** The Washington Cares Fund allows residents to access a benefit of up to \$36,500 for care costs. This helps reduce the financial strain on families and caregivers and enables people to access care that aligns with their personal and financial needs. By increasing access to affordable care, this program also relieves pressure on family caregivers, potentially enabling more of them to stay in the workforce.

**Key Takeaway:** Public long-term care insurance programs offer a sustainable way to fund elder care and can ease reliance on unpaid family caregivers, strengthening the care economy and workforce.

## Vermont's Hub and Spoke Model for Community Health and Mental Health Care

**Program Overview:** Vermont's Hub and Spoke model integrates community health centers and mental health services to create a comprehensive support system for individuals with chronic care needs, including mental health and substance use disorders. In this model, "hubs" serve as central treatment centers, and "spokes" are community-based providers who offer ongoing support.

**Impact:** This system has reduced barriers to accessing care by ensuring that mental health and addiction services are integrated into community health services, reaching individuals in their communities. The model's success has improved health outcomes and reduced strain on emergency services.

**Key Takeaway:** Integrated care models that combine community health, mental health, and social support services can improve access to care and health outcomes, especially for complex needs, and could be adapted to address caregiving gaps in other regions.



## Mountain West Examples

### Arizona's Long-Term Care System Workforce Development Alliance

**Program Overview:** Arizona implemented a long-term care workforce development initiative funded through Medicaid, focusing on building a pipeline of caregivers for elderly and disabled populations. The program emphasizes workforce training, certification assistance, and mentorship programs for caregivers in nursing, home health, and other elder care roles. It also includes a partnership with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) to ensure Medicaid recipients have access to quality long-term care.

**Impact:** Arizona's program has reduced caregiver shortages, particularly in rural areas where elder care demand is high. Through mentorship and certification support, the program has also increased job satisfaction and retention in long-term care roles.

**Key Takeaway:** Targeted Medicaid-funded workforce programs can help states increase their pool of qualified long-term care caregivers and reduce gaps in rural healthcare access.

### Colorado's Child Care Contribution Credit

**Program Overview:** Colorado provides a unique child care contribution tax credit for individuals and businesses that donate to qualifying child care programs, which can then use these funds to improve facilities, expand child care slots, and support workforce compensation.

**Impact:** This tax credit has allowed more child care facilities to invest in quality improvements and expand access, particularly in underserved areas. This approach encourages private-sector support for public child care needs, creating a funding stream to bolster the quality and availability of care services without solely relying on state funding.

**Key Takeaway:** Tax credits for contributions to child care programs can incentivize private investment, helping states fund high-quality care and increasing availability in child care deserts.

### Colorado's Early Childhood Workforce Initiatives

**Program Overview:** Colorado has pioneered several initiatives to strengthen the early childhood workforce, including wage supplements and workforce development grants. The state's Office of Early Childhood runs the Early Childhood Workforce Development Plan, which offers scholarships and stipends to early childhood educators and incentivizes child care centers to improve training and career advancement opportunities.

**Impact:** These programs have increased retention and upskilled Colorado's early childhood educators, particularly in underserved areas. The wage supplement and scholarship programs are effective in helping early educators access training without incurring significant debt, providing long-term stability in the child care workforce.

**Key Takeaway:** Wage supplements, scholarships, and structured career pathways for early educators help ensure workforce retention and quality improvements, offering a model that could be adapted to other states with similar workforce challenges.



## New Mexico's Pre-K and Early Childhood Education Expansion and Wage Supplement Program

**Program Overview:** New Mexico has expanded its pre-K and early childhood education programs significantly over the last decade, primarily through the Early Childhood Education & Care Department. The state also launched a wage supplement program for early childhood educators, providing annual stipends based on education level, experience, and work location.

**Impact:** New Mexico's wage supplements have helped retain and attract qualified educators, particularly in rural and underserved areas. This expansion has increased access to early childhood education, enabling parents to stay in the workforce. The initiative has also strengthened New Mexico's early education workforce by reducing turnover.

**Key Takeaway:** Wage supplements and dedicated funding for early childhood education help reduce turnover and build a more qualified workforce, which is particularly beneficial in rural and underserved communities.

## Nevada's Governor's Workforce Development Board Initiatives

**Program Overview:** Nevada's Governor's Workforce Development Board has proposed and supported initiatives to address the need for affordable child care and care workforce stability. This includes the development of child care hubs connected to public transportation and incentives for employers to provide on-site child care. The board has also recommended establishing wage standards and benefits for child care and direct care workers to make these careers more sustainable.

**Impact:** These initiatives are expected to ease the financial burden of care for families and improve job satisfaction in the care workforce by providing wage stability. Nevada's efforts to connect child care hubs with public transportation also improve accessibility, particularly for low-income families who rely on public transit.

**Key Takeaway:** Workforce development boards can play a critical role in addressing care economy gaps by promoting policies that enhance access to affordable child care and improve conditions for care workers, aligning with regional needs.

## Utah's Care About Child Care Program

**Program Overview:** Utah's Care About Child Care program is a statewide initiative managed by the Utah Office of Child Care to provide training, resources, and support for child care providers. The program offers free online licensing and professional development courses, connects providers to resources, and has established a rating system to help families find quality care. Utah also offers a child care quality system that rewards facilities with higher-quality ratings through grants and subsidies.

**Impact:** This program has helped increase the quality of child care by making training more accessible to providers and incentivizing quality improvements through grants. Utah's program has positively impacted providers and families by strengthening provider education and assisting families to identify quality child care, particularly in low-income areas.

**Key Takeaway:** State-supported training programs and quality rating systems help improve child care access and quality, creating a more stable and informed child care economy for families and providers alike.

These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of investing in the care economy through strategies including wage supplements, public insurance programs, paid leave, and support networks. Adopting similar policies could enable Southern Nevada to strengthen its care economy by addressing workforce challenges, improving care quality, and making care more accessible and affordable for residents.

## Appendix B: About Tripp Umbach

Founded in 1990, Tripp Umbach is among the most established and respected private consulting firms in the United States. Tripp Umbach has a rich history rooted in community assessment, economic impact assessment, and economic development. Tripp Umbach is a national leader in conducting feasibility analysis/economic impact studies at the intersection of higher education, healthcare, and economic development. Since 1990, Tripp Umbach has completed more than 2,500 customized studies for more clients in more than 500 markets worldwide.



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