

SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

From: The Honorable Dale E. Kildee

Sent By: maggie.randolph@mail.house.gov

Date: 3/9/2012

Support Head Start and CCDBG Funding

****This is a Programmatic Request****

Deadline: March 14, 2012

Dear Colleague:

We ask you to join us in sending the attached letter to the Appropriations Committee requesting an \$825 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), a \$325 million increase for Head Start and Early Head Start, a \$20 million increase for IDEA Part C, and dedicated Race to the Top funding for early childhood programs in the fiscal year 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Increased funding for early education and development is integral to every child having the opportunity to succeed in school and in life.

Stable high-quality child care contributes both to helping working families stay employed and to children's school readiness. For many families, child care is the highest or second highest cost in family budgets. Without child care assistance, many low-income working families cannot access safe, stable, and effective child care.

Head Start is our country's premier comprehensive early learning program and helps low-income children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. It combines early education, health care, social services, and nutrition services with a strong focus on parent involvement and support and builds on the strengths of local communities.

The Race to the Top program asks states to make important education reforms including building early learning systems. Dedicated Race to the Top funds for early childhood programs will allow states to continue their efforts to expand access and improve child outcomes.

Part C Grants for Infants and Families under IDEA provide valuable supports to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families and would benefit greatly from a \$20 million increase.

If you would like to sign the letter or have any questions, please contact Maggie Randolph with Congressman Kildee (Maggie.randolph@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Dale E. Kildee
Member of Congress

Todd Russell Platts
Member of Congress

March X, 2012

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We respectfully request that you include an \$825 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), a \$325 million increase for Head Start and Early Head Start, and a \$20 million increase in Part C Grants for Infants and Families under IDEA in the fiscal year 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill. In addition, we ask you to devote a meaningful portion of the Race to the Top funds for a state-based early learning competition. These programs are essential to our country's efforts to support parents' employment and help our children arrive at kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed in school and in life.

Child care fees are now often the highest or second highest cost in a family budget. In these challenging economic times, it is especially important to help families afford stable child care so parents can get and keep a job. Unfortunately, only about one in six children eligible for Federal child care assistance receives help under the Child Care and Development Block Grant. We urge you to provide an \$825 million increase for CCDBG so that we can serve 1.5 million children with this important program. High-quality child care also contributes to children's school readiness: research finds that children from birth through age five in higher quality care score higher on assessments of cognitive skills, language ability, vocabulary, short-term memory and attention than children in lower quality care. CCDBG helps low-income families afford care that can better support their children's development.

Head Start is central to our country's effort to help low-income children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. It combines early education, health care, social services, and nutrition services with a strong focus on parent involvement and support and builds on the strengths of local communities. A \$325 million increase for Head Start will help protect high-quality programs, help support the Head Start re-competition process, and serve additional children through Early Head Start.

The Race to the Top program includes five assurances toward education reform that must be met to qualify for funds. The early learning assurance asks that states make strides in building early learning systems and increasing the number of children in high-quality settings. We ask that you include dedicated Race to the Top funds for early childhood to allow states to continue their efforts to expand access and improve child outcomes.

Finally, Part C Grants for Infants and Families under IDEA provide valuable supports to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families and would benefit greatly from a \$20 million increase.

Whether or not America's most vulnerable young children and their families will reach their potential depends in large part on our investment in these programs, and so, once again, we respectfully ask that you consider our request.

Sincerely,