

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
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, and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Cole, and Ranking Members Lowey and DeLauro:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we encourage you to include the President's request of \$750 million for Preschool Development Grants.

Decades of research confirm that investing in early learning today leads to significant short and long term improvements through closing of achievement gaps and by producing other positive outcomes, such as lower special education placements, less grade repetition, higher graduation rates and lower crime and delinquency rates. Studies have found that every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood education yields a \$7.00 return on that investment by reducing costs associated with educational remediation, teen pregnancy, and juvenile delinquency and crime and adding savings due to greater lifetime earnings. From a fiscal perspective alone, investment in early childhood education is unquestionably a wise use of limited resources.

Supporting these grants is critical because too many children lack access to early learning programs. Nationally, less than half of 4-year olds are enrolled in preschool programs, and only about a third of low-income children have access to these programs. Even when there is access, low-income families typically struggle to have quality and affordable options. A national report found that of the children that are in state prekindergarten programs, 42% of those children are in programs that meet less than half of recommended quality standards.

Increased federal funding for the Preschool Development Grants will build on the Congressional support that began in the FY 2014 and FY 2015 Omnibus appropriations bills to address those unmet needs. This funding supports 18 states, which represents only half of the number of states that submitted quality applications. With these additional resources, the department could fund programs for all of these states and perhaps even more. Approving this year's funding request would meet the President's goal of ensuring that states have the capacity to sustain effective, high-quality preschool systems. The specific purpose of the grants is to help states build or expand access to high-quality preschool through investments in facilities, workforce development, and quality infrastructure, including program standards, monitoring, evaluation and expanding quality programs in targeted communities. The grants will enhance such efforts, particularly in states that either do not fund preschool programs or need to increase the number of full-day, high-quality programs.

High-quality preschool is a proven way to improve the school readiness and long-term academic success of children by supporting their academic and social-emotional skills. Supporting the expansion of these grants is an important step to building a globally competitive 21st century workforce that will sustain our nation's economy in the long-term.

Please support the Prekindergarten Development Grants at \$750 million in the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee bill. It is a wise investment in our nation's children and economic competitiveness. Thank you.

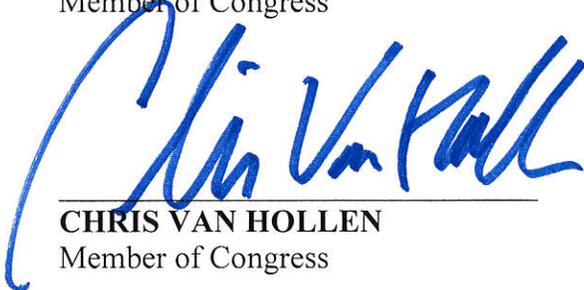
Sincerely,



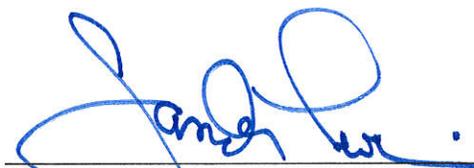
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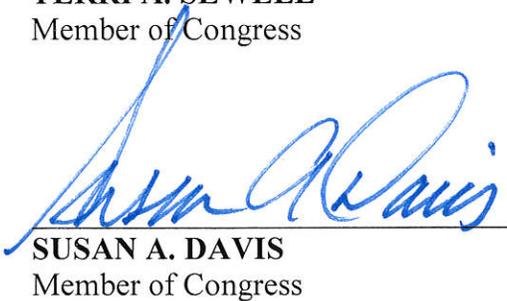
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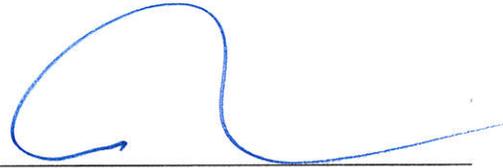
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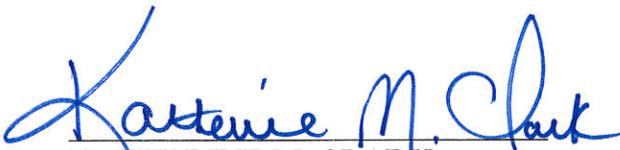
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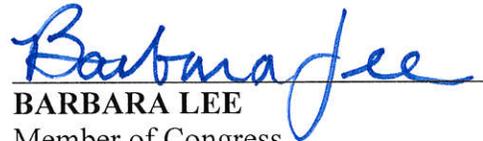
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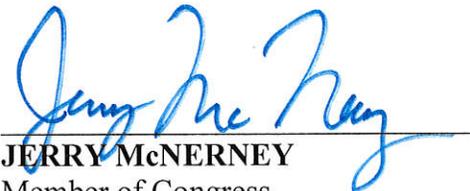
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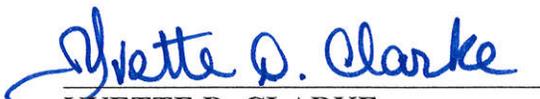
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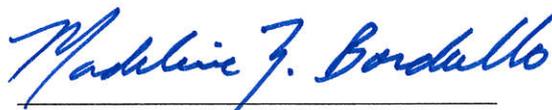

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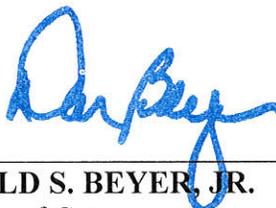

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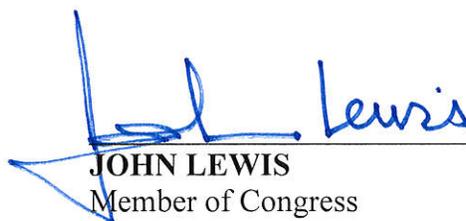

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