

Senator Patty Murray
Chairman, Senate Budget Committee
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Representative Paul Ryan
Chairman, House Budget Committee
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Senator Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Representative Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member, House Budget Committee
B-71 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murray, Chairman Ryan, Ranking Member Sessions and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

As Democratic and Republican state legislators from across the country, we understand the challenges of balancing budgets while making critical investments that drive economic success for our constituents and states. We believe that maintaining and expanding high quality early childhood education is an effective and efficient expenditure even when budgets are tight. We urge you to make these investments in young children a priority in your deliberations.

Quality early childhood education programs are a critical tool for preventing the achievement gap, boosting school achievement, reducing the need for special and remedial education, building stronger families, and preparing our future workforce of highly productive adults. Simply put, early childhood programs are a key solution to prevent many of the problems that require increased social spending and result in budget deficits.

Many states and communities have developed and expanded preschool programs that produce results for children, families and taxpayers. Despite significant investments, we are still serving a fraction of the children we need to reach and educate. Increased federal funding will help improve and expand early childhood education, provide greater access to children in need, and produce better education, health and economic outcomes.

Early childhood education is a practical, not partisan issue. We hear demand for it every day from parents, educators, business leaders, communities of faith, and Democrats and Republicans alike. Your budget negotiations present an opportunity to rally around something on which the vast majority of Americans agree: children are our greatest resource, and quality early learning is one of the best investments we can make in their future and ours.

Sincerely,

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