



First Five Years Fund

April 9, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions

Dear Committee Leaders:

On behalf of First Five Years Fund (FFYF), I would like to congratulate you on months of hard work, culminating in a bipartisan Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization – the Every Child Achieves Act. I would particularly like to thank you for integrating early childhood education into ESEA, and recognizing that education in the earliest years is an essential component of a child's success later in school.

Many provisions in the bill help increase state and local commitments to high-quality early learning opportunities that improve the education, health and economic outcomes for our nation. Specifically, mentioning explicitly the allowable use of Title I funds for early learning initiatives, requiring state standards to be aligned with state early learning guidelines, permitting Title II funds to be used for professional development that focuses on a child's early years and works to coordinate activities between preschool and elementary teachers and leaders, and including pre-K as part of the charter school program are all commendable examples of how early learning can and should be integrated into ESEA.

As you continue the legislative process, we hope to continue our productive partnership and work towards the inclusion of a dedicated funding stream for early childhood education in the bill.

Thank you again for your hard work and commitment to ensuring America's greatest resource – our children – have an opportunity to benefit from quality early learning opportunities so they enter the K-12 system adequately prepared and ready to learn.

Sincerely,

Kris Perry
Executive Director
First Five Years Fund