



May 24, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
United States Senate  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran,

On behalf of the First Five Years Fund (FFYF), I would like to thank you for your continued commitment to increasing and maintaining funding for early learning programs in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Omnibus Appropriations bill.

I applaud you and the other members of the Subcommittee for coming together to recognize the critical importance of high-quality early childhood education programs for America's youngest children and their families. Increased funding for Child Care and Development Block Grants, Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, along with sustained funding for Preschool Development Grants, builds upon previous bipartisan efforts to make high-quality care more accessible for the kids who need it most. Access to high-quality early learning programs helps children from low-income families enter kindergarten prepared to learn, closes achievement gaps, and offers families greater opportunities and a pathway out of poverty.

Now, as the attention turns to FY2018, I look forward to working with you to ensure investments in high-quality early childhood education programs continue to grow. Increased investments directly benefit disadvantaged children and families, and research shows that every dollar invested in quality birth-to-five early learning and care programs provides taxpayers with a 13 percent return on that investment, per year through improved health, education, social, and employment outcomes.

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