



August 1, 2007

The Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Clinton:

It was a pleasure and a privilege to share the dais with you at the Center for American Progress forum on July 25th to discuss the important topic of pre-kindergarten. Thank you for introducing S. 1823, the *Ready to Learn Act*, to provide high-quality pre-k education. We applaud your leadership in setting policies to ensure that all our children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

The *Ready to Learn Act* includes the key elements of high-quality early education. Pre-K Now welcomes the bill's provision to put a teacher with a BA in every pre-k classroom, to keep group sizes and instructor-to-student ratios low, and to support improvements in developing and implementing research-based curricula that address children's social, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral needs. We also applaud the steady source of funding to guarantee the health and safety of children and to enable teachers to continue to improve their abilities through ongoing professional development. These features are essential to achieve a high-quality program and the benefits that children receive from participating in them.

Your bill sets a solid framework for funding and implementation that will help the states build quality programs. The 2-tiered approach to expanding access sets measurable goals for states including appropriate priorities for new and expanded programs. In addition, the proposed 50 percent match commits significant federal funding while allowing states to continue their investments in high-quality pre-k. The bill also recognizes the strengths of the existing diversity of pre-k providers by allotting 25 percent of funding to community-based providers.

Finally, we welcome your commitment to also propose the bill as an amendment to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Pre-K Now strongly recommends incorporating early childhood in this landmark education law to ensure that pre-k becomes an integral part of our nation's public education system. The inclusion of this bill as a separate early education title in the reauthorization of NCLB will help dissolve the boundaries between pre-k and K-12 education.

I am delighted to offer our support for this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as the NCLB reauthorization move forward. Thank you for your leadership on behalf of pre-k and young children.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Libby Doggett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Libby" being more prominent.

Libby Doggett, Ph.D.

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Executive Director

cc: Members, HELP Committee, US Senate