



NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION

November 9, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor, and Pensions  
United States Senate  
731 Hart Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
Ranking Member, Committee on Health,  
Education, Labor and Pensions  
United States Senate  
379A Russell Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Enzi:

I write to offer the National Head Start Association's ("NHS&A") support of S.1002, the Child Care Facilities Financing Act of 2009, which would begin to address the unmet capital needs of early care and education programs in low-income communities across the country by establishing a competitive grant program within the Department of Health and Human Services for the acquisition, construction, or improvement of early care and education facilities.

NHS&A, a membership association representing over 50,000 Head Start directors, staff, parents and friends, strongly supports this bill and its house companion, HR 1685. Due to the significant investment into the Head Start and Early Head Start programs (collectively "Head Start") by the federal government, Head Start is expanding to serve more of the nation's growing number of low-income families and at-risk children. As such, we support additional funding opportunities for facilities for early care and education.

S. 1002 (and its companion bill, H.R. 1685) would provide for competitive grants to be awarded to experienced non-profit community organizations for early childhood facilities capital funds. These funds would provide financial assistance for the acquisition, construction, or improvement of center-based or home-based early childhood facilities or equipment, and specialized technical assistance to undertake facilities-related projects in low-income communities across the country.

I hope that you will continue your support for quality early care and education programs by addressing these programs' capital needs. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yasmina Vinci".

Yasmina Vinci

Executive Director

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The National Head Start Association, an independent membership organization, advocates on behalf of the entire Head Start community and provides training and resources to Head programs nationwide.