



The Honorable Mazie K. Hirono
United States House of Representatives
1229 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Hirono:

June 13, 2008

Legal Momentum, the nation's oldest advocacy organization, advancing the rights of women and girls, applauds Representative Hirono's office for introducing the Providing Resources Early for Kids (Pre-K) Act, H.R. 3289. Legal Momentum has long been an advocate for quality education initiatives and enthusiastically supports Congressional bills and programs aimed at enriching early educational experiences. By increasing the number of quality early childhood educators, improving preschool student-teacher ratios and increasing the amount of time that working families can access early education programs, H.R. 3289 would prepare America's youth for success, ensuring that they arrive in kindergarten with the fundamental building blocks of education and ready to succeed.

Research shows that quality early education programs improve early reading and math skills and increase the likelihood of students graduating from high-school and continuing on to become productive members of society. In order to ensure that our children get the best early education experience they can, they need quality educational professionals who employ the best practices, as determined nationally, and convey their wealth of knowledge upon the next generation. The Pre-K Act, in providing access to state and federal funding and requiring that all teachers have a minimum of an associate's degree, empowers early childhood educators with the resources and materials they will need to provide a knowledgeable and enjoyable early childhood educational experience for America's youngest students.

"Childcare is an investment in the future of our country. What could be more important?," queried Connecticut Representative Rosa L. DeLauro, (D), when garnering support for the FOCUS Act, H.R. 2000, another early childhood education bill, which was also supported by Legal Momentum. In order to successfully compete in the ever-expanding global market, we must nurture the potential of all citizens, especially our children. Early childhood investments have both short-term and long-term payoffs. In the short run, children who have access to quality early education programs are less likely to repeat a grade or require special education services. Over the life of the child, these programs, no doubt, foster creativity and a love of learning, both of which will be necessary to keep America moving forward in the global economy.

H.R. 3289 takes an important step in providing quality education for upcoming generations. Legal Momentum fully supports the bill and will continue to advocate for programs and initiatives dedicated to enriching educational experiences of the nation's children.

Sincerely,

Lisalyn Jacobs
Vice President for Government Relations