



May 23, 2007

The Hon. Sherrod Brown
455 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. George V. Voinovich
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Brown and Voinovich:

We applaud your leadership in introducing legislation to enable our nation's pre-k classrooms to attract and maintain a talented, dedicated workforce. As you recognize, opportunities for pre-k teachers lag far behind those available to their colleagues in grades K-12, with the average pre-k teacher earning less than half the compensation for an elementary school teacher. Your bill is a step in the right direction in this important respect.

As your legislation notes, adequate teacher compensation constitutes a vital part of delivering high-quality services to our nation's children. A 2000 study published in *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* notes that of all factors contributing to classroom viability, teacher compensation is one of only two that can be used to predict the quality of preschool classrooms. Other noted studies have found that low salaries limit teacher quality and retention, while undermining teachers' potential for long-term professional development. We welcome your proposal as a holistic approach toward improving the working conditions and professional opportunities of pre-k educators.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing the quality of services provided to the nation's youngest students. We hope to work closely with you in developing this and other initiatives on behalf of early education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Libby Doggett".

Libby Doggett, Ph.D.
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Patterson".

Kathy Patterson
Federal Policy Director

cc: Members, United States Senate