

## **The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Early Childhood Provisions**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which was recently approved by the House and Senate, makes significant new investments in child care, early education, and related programs, including:

- \$2 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, with \$255,186,000 of this amount set aside for quality improvement (beyond the required 4 percent), of which \$93,587,000 is targeted for improving infant and toddler care. This funding will be available upon enactment of the legislation. These funds must be used to supplement, not supplant, existing state general revenue funds.
- \$2.1 billion for Head Start, including \$1.1 billion for expansion of Early Head Start programs. Of the Early Head Start funding, up to 10 percent is available for training and technical assistance and up to 3 percent is available for monitoring. The report language indicates that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is expected to work with grantees to manage resources in order to sustain FY 2009 awards through FY 2010. The report language also reminds the Secretary of HHS that the agency has the authority to waive the requirement that grantees provide a non-federal match.
- \$400 million for IDEA Preschool (section 619) Grants and \$500 million for formula grants under IDEA Part C to help states serve infants and toddlers with disabilities and special needs.
- \$3 billion for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund to provide states with additional funds to serve the growing number of poor families in this recession; and \$319 million to extend supplemental funds for states with high population growth and/or increased poverty, providing qualified states with the same grant amount in FY 2010 that they received in FY 2009.
- \$80 million each for the Army, Air Force, and Navy/Marines for military child development centers (in addition to planning money).
- \$100 million for Teacher Quality Partnership grants to address teacher shortages and modernize the teaching workforce. These grants could be used to support the early childhood workforce through compensation and other initiatives.
- \$13 billion for Title I grants for education programs for disadvantaged children, including early childhood programs and activities (although there is only an expectation that states will use some of the funds for early childhood, not a specific set-aside as in the Senate bill).
- \$53.6 billion for a new State Fiscal Stabilization Fund to support education, including early childhood programs, and other vital public services over the next two years.

In addition to the provisions related to early care and education, there are also several other important provisions to help low-income families in general, including a provision that reduces the eligibility threshold for the refundable component of the child tax credit from \$8,500 to \$3,000.

While there were a few disappointments with the final legislation (for example, it does not include \$726 million for Afterschool Meals as in the House version or \$400 million for the Social Services Block Grant as in the Senate version), overall this was a tremendous victory for children and families.

For the full text of the bill, see <http://appropriations.house.gov>.