

## House Budget Bill Would Make Deep Cuts in Head Start and Child Care

February 23, 2011

H.R. 1, the House-passed bill that sets federal spending levels for the rest of FY 2011, makes significant cuts in Head Start and Early Head Start and the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), our key federal early learning investments.

- The bill would cut more than \$1 billion dollars from Head Start/Early Head Start and \$39 million from child care.
  - These cuts would cause 368,000 children to lose early learning support.
  - These cuts could cause 16,000 Head Start classrooms to shut down and 55,000 teachers and others working in local Head Start programs to lose their jobs.
- Child care and early education make a real difference for the millions of families and children they serve. They help children succeed in school and in life, and enable parents to work. As a result, these programs contribute to our nation's current and future prosperity.
  - Early learning investments are one of the most cost-efficient approaches to increasing education, health and economic outcomes and lowering the costs of remediation and social dependence, according to research by Nobel Laureate economist James Heckman. During the course of their lives, children who experience high-quality early learning programs will be healthier, more self-sufficient and less likely to enter the criminal justice system.
  - A study found that single mothers of young children who received child care assistance were 39 percent more likely to still be employed after two years and former welfare recipients were 82 percent more likely to still be employed after two years than those who did not receive any help paying for child care.
- Millions of children are unable to receive a strong early learning experience due to already insufficient funding. Only one out of six children eligible for federal child care assistance receives it. Less than half of eligible preschool age children can access Head Start and only 4 percent of eligible infants and toddlers can participate in Early Head Start. The cuts in H.R. 1 would only increase this unmet need.
- These cuts will force more low-income families onto waiting lists for help in paying for child care. Studies of families on waiting lists show that many strain their limited budgets to afford the cost of stable, good-quality child care on their own while struggling to pay for other basic expenses. Some families on the waiting list use low-cost—and often low-quality—care because they cannot afford the care they would prefer for their children. And in some cases, parents on the waiting list are unable to even hold onto their jobs without reliable child care.