

Strong Start for America's Children Act introduced in Senate and House ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

Today, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Representatives George Miller (D-CA) and Richard Hanna (R-NY) introduced the **Strong Start for America's Children Act** ^[2]: landmark legislation that provides for universal access to high-quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children through a federal-state partnership and expands quality child care for infants and toddlers.

High-quality early education experiences are widely recognized as key to preparing young children for school success and improving the lifetime employment and earnings of low-income children. In addition to children and families, our society as a whole bears a large cost burden for children not equipped to succeed in life. The Strong Start for America's Children Act would contribute to rebuilding the middle class and help equalize the opportunities our children have at the starting gate.

CLASP supports the following components of the bill that would advance high-quality, comprehensive early care and education systems across the country by:

- Setting clear expectations for high-quality services including high staff qualifications and developmentally appropriate and evidence-based curricula and learning environments.
- Providing critical supports to increase the educational attainment of the early childhood workforce.
- Addressing the needs of low-income working families by allowing for the provision of pre-kindergarten services in schools, Head Start and child care settings and establishing expectations for the provision of full-day services and comprehensive health services.
- Providing for partnerships between Early Head Start and child care programs to ensure that more vulnerable infants and toddlers have access to the comprehensive early education and family support services that are the hallmark of Head Start.

It's now up to Members of Congress to move this legislation forward as well as support a final budget that ends the sequester and includes significant new investments in early learning.

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Region: United States ^[3]

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<http://www.harkin.senate.gov/documents/pdf/StrongStartForAmericasChildrenSummary.pdf> ^[3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7865>