



THE NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION

HEAD START'S INCLUSION IN THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE

An infusion of funds into the Head Start and Early Head Start programs (“Head Start”) is necessary to provide economic relief. **Yet we are hearing from Congressional Staff members that they aren't hearing enough from the Head Start community.** An infusion of recovery funds into local Head Start communities—while serving our nation's growing neediest—is both an investment for the future and a cost effective anti-poverty policy.

We are in the midst of a unique political moment. Upon the advice of leaders in the field and our coalition members, we have increased the amount we are requesting in the economic recovery package to \$4.3 billion:

- Head Start needs \$3 billion to help cover operating expenses and to provide quality funds to enable Head Start programs to address needs that have gone unmet in recent years. Much of these funds would be used to align the salaries of Head Start teachers and other staff with the rest of the marketplace and help to reduce the current high level of turnover.
- The remaining \$1.3 billion would provide an infusion of one-time funding to cover critical items for Head Start programs, including:
 - deferred maintenance on facilities (such as plumbing repairs, carpeting and fencing);
 - updates to older, inefficient buildings (such as energy efficiencies and weatherization);
 - enhancing Head Start environments (such as playgrounds and classrooms furnishings);
 - upgrading necessary technologies to ensure Head Start stays current;
 - transportation to help children access services (critical for rural programs and programs serving homeless children);
 - converting program models to serve infants and toddlers;
 - making a down payment to help teachers meet the baccalaureate degree requirement and to begin to build an appropriate teacher compensation schedule; and
 - grants to construct new Head Start facilities because many Head Start facilities, like public schools, are crumbling and are in need replacement.
- Infusing these funds into Head Start programs will improve the lives of more than 1 million low-income children and families served by Head Start and the 215,000 teachers and staff working in Head Start, as well as improve the local economy.