

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY ON HOUSE PASSAGE
OF THE HEAD START CONFERENCE REPORT**

WASHINGTON, DC— Today, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, released the following statement in response to the passage by the United States House of Representatives of the Head Start Conference Report.

“Today’s vote by the House of Representatives will give the nation’s low-income children a better Head Start on the American Dream.

This Conference Report improves access to Head Start, strengthens the Head Start workforce, builds on the highly successful Early Head Start program, and encourages both Head Start and Early Head Start to work more closely with local schools and other human service agencies.

Just as in elementary and secondary education, reform in early education cannot be accomplished on a tin cup budget. In the 1990’s, we tripled the federal investment in Head Start and expanded its services by 52 percent. But for the past three years, President Bush has proposed a budget that fails to reach a single new child through Head Start.

Yesterday, however, the White House again turned its back again on America’s most vulnerable children and families by vetoing the appropriations bill for these basic services.

It’s time to do more – not less – for children in their early years. The Head Start Conference Report this week is another opportunity to invest in the future of America’s children, and I look forward to its swift enactment into law.”

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