

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 3, 2008

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**KENNEDY ON RESULTS OF THE NATION'S REPORT CARD IN WRITING**

WASHINGTON, DC— Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, released the following statement in response to the results released today on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

“The results released today on the nation’s report card in writing show that our schools are taking steps in the right direction. We’re making good strides in teaching students the basics, but more work remains to be done to help our students develop advanced writing skills. We still have a long way to go ensure that all of our students gain the analytic and composition skills needed to succeed.

Nationwide, student performance has improved. I particularly applaud our urban districts. They’re working hard to help all of their students achieve. The results released today show that students in many urban districts are making impressive gains on the writing assessment, including minority and low-income students.

But across the country, the achievement gap remains. Our low-income and minority students continue to lag behind. This not only limits opportunities for these students. It also threatens our competitiveness as a nation, as these students make up a growing proportion of our population.

These results show once again that we must give schools the support and the resources they need to ensure that all students learn to high standards. Real resources will help ensure every child gets a chance to attend a great public school.”

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