



Fact Sheet

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE DEMOCRATS

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Hon. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott • Ranking Member

The Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2015

Millions of young children from low-income families lack access to high-quality, affordable preschool programs. Decades of studies have found that quality preschool leads to a wide range of short- and long-term benefits, including better educational outcomes, stronger job earnings, and lower levels of crime and delinquency. The Strong Start for America's Children Act is a bold, 10-year innovative federal-state partnership to expand and improve early learning opportunities for children across the birth-to-age-five continuum.

The *Strong Start for America's Children Act 2015* was introduced on May 19, 2015 by Congressmen Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) and Richard L. Hanna (R-NY). The bill provides:

Access to Preschool for 4-Year Olds

- Formula funding is provided to states – with a state match – for high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten for four-year old children from families earning below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
- States in turn provide sub-grants to local entities to offer children high-quality prekindergarten, which includes:
 - Teachers with high qualifications;
 - Rigorous health and safety standards;
 - Small class sizes and low child-to-staff ratios;
 - Instruction that is based in evidence and is developmentally appropriate;
 - Evidence-based child-staff comprehensive services for children, including strong parent and family engagement, nutritious meals, and health screening and referrals.

Early Learning Quality Partnerships

- Early Head Start and child care partnerships are supported to improve the quality of child care for infants and toddlers through age three.
- Local Early Head Start agencies contract with local center-based child care programs and family child care homes serving infants and toddlers to raise child care program quality through training and technical assistance.
- These partnerships meet the high-quality performance standards of Early Head Start and blend federal funds to provide high-quality, full-day care.

Support for Children with Disabilities

- Authorization of federal funding for early childhood services for children with special needs would be increased through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs.

Home Visitation

- The bill expresses a sense of the House that federal funding for voluntary, evidence-based home visitation programs be continued.