



Dear Legislator,

As leaders of Pennsylvania's law enforcement associations, we and our colleagues deal directly with the aftermath of crime. We take seriously our responsibility to protect public safety, seek justice after crime has occurred AND support evidence-based approaches that can prevent crime in the first place.

High-quality home visiting parent support and early education programs put families on paths to self sufficiency and children on paths to less crime, less abuse and neglect, and better school and life outcomes. **We urge Pennsylvania's lawmakers to:**

- **Increase state funding available to the four evidence-based home visiting models by supporting a \$9 million increase to the Community-Based Family Centers line item in the 2017-2018 final state budget to support 1,700 additional families statewide; and**
- **Grow funding for high-quality pre-k by \$75 million to serve an additional 8,400 at-risk three- and four-year-olds next school year.**

Child abuse and neglect are among the worst cases we must face. While abuse or neglect can happen at any point in a child's life, the most common victims are under three years old. Children who survive abuse or neglect continue to deal with the emotional and physical pain long after the incident. They are twice as likely to commit a crime later in life. They are also statistically more likely to abuse their own children, perpetuating a generational cycle of violence.

Pennsylvania's evidence-based home visiting programs (Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families America and Early Head Start) address this problem. At-risk parents seeking more support are paired with nurses or other trained professionals, starting in pregnancy through the first two to three years of the child's life. A study of one home visiting model, the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), found that participation in the program cut abuse and neglect of at-risk kids nearly in half. Other studies of NFP also found the parents became less reliant on welfare and less likely to become involved in crime themselves.

The program had a profound impact on those children long after their parents had completed the visits. By age 19, kids who had gone through the program were half as likely as their peers to have been arrested for a crime.

Research also clearly shows that high-quality pre-k programs for at-risk kids not only can reduce kids' likelihood of committing a crime later in life, but also provide far greater savings than their cost.

Results from studies of state preschool programs show that high-quality early education programs can be implemented on a large scale by states and that these programs have sustained benefits for children. For example, by the time they are past third grade, children who attended New Jersey's preschool program for two years were three-quarters of an academic year ahead in math, compared to their peers who did not attend, and two-thirds of an

academic year ahead in literacy.

In addition, attending preschool also cut the likelihood of being held back in school by 40 percent and the likelihood of needing special education services by 31 percent. These education outcomes result in more young people graduating high school on time, which is significant because high school dropouts are three and one-half times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested, and more than eight times as likely to be incarcerated.

Pennsylvania should prioritize these investments in evidence-based home visiting programs and high quality pre-k to help thousands more disadvantaged children become successful, productive adults.

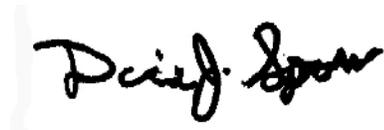
Respectfully Submitted,



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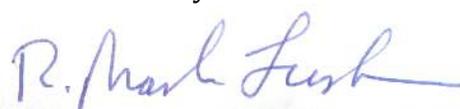
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