



KidsFlash – March 19, 2010

Federal Early Education Funding Suffers Set Back

In last week's KidsFlash, we urged you to call Senators Udall and Bennet to voice your support for the inclusion of the Early Learning Challenge Fund in the federal Budget Reconciliation bill that combines health care and student aid legislation. Thanks to all of you who responded to our call for action and voiced your support for kids. Unfortunately, on Thursday, the Early Learning Challenge Fund was eliminated from the Budget Reconciliation bill. This is a disappointment to child advocates around the country. However, in a Thursday press conference, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said of early education: "The president is absolutely committed on this issue, I'm absolutely committed, and we're going to find another vehicle to help the early learning community." The Children's Campaign is committed to continuing to advocate for these dollars and will keep you updated as we hear more about early childhood federal funding.

Kids-Related News From the Capitol This Week

Thursday marked a victory for kids as the House gave final approval to Senate Bill 8. The bill authorizes a study of the average daily membership method of determining school enrollment, opposed to Colorado's current system which uses a single count date of October 1. Passage in the House nearly completes the legislative process for Senate Bill 8, which will now be sent back to the Senate for concurrence with the House amendments, and then on to the Governor for his signature.

Click below to read the Children's Campaign's fact sheet on SB 8.

<http://tinyurl.com/ykqfy06>

House Bill 1335 passed final reading in the House on Wednesday and will now move on to the Senate for committee review. The bill would authorize Boards of Cooperative Services (BOCES) to serve as School Food Authorities, which would allow schools to participate in group purchasing programs to make healthier foods more affordable. The bill sets up a grant program to support BOCES in this process and requires grantees to meet national Institute of Medicine's nutrition standards. BOCES are also encouraged to purchase locally grown and produced food.

Click below to read the Children's Campaign's fact sheet on HB 1335.

<http://tinyurl.com/ya66yh4>

House Bill 1026 passed the Senate Appropriations Committee today. The bill would create a child care quality incentive grant program to fund higher child care reimbursement rates for early education providers who improve and sustain program quality.

Click below to read the Children's Campaign fact sheet on HB 1026.

<http://tinyurl.com/yaxqluj>

The 2010-11 School Finance Act, House Bill 10-1369, is moving quickly through the legislative process. The bill was introduced on Wednesday and just passed second reading on the House floor today. Many legislators were deeply saddened to pass the bill because it decreases school funding for 2010-11 by \$260 million. While the Children's Campaign is also disappointed by the decrease in K-12 education funding, we recognize the General Assembly's efforts to be equitable and thoughtful in determining how to balance the state's budget in the face of historic revenue shortfalls. The budget debate will continue next week when the annual state budget bill, known as the Long Bill, is introduced.

Join the CCC for the 2010 Health Care Day of Action!

Join the Colorado Children's Campaign on March 29th for the annual Health Care Day of Action. Coloradans statewide are invited to come to the capitol and speak to your legislators about the state of health care in Colorado and how it affects your lives. Last year over 200 Coloradans turned out for the event and this year we are expecting an equally enthusiastic showing. The All Kids Covered Initiative and the Colorado Children's Campaign are proud to be sponsoring the annual Health Care Day of Action and Children's Campaign President Chris Watney will speak as part of a panel discussion. Health Care Day of Action will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and will include an introduction to what is at stake in Colorado this legislative session, a discussion on national healthcare reform efforts, and lunch with legislators. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Click below to learn more and to RSVP for the Health Care Day of Action.

<http://cchi.convio.net/site/Calendar/1761581333?view=Detail&id=100101>

Support Kids, Participate in the 2010 Census

As 2010 census questionnaires arrive in mailboxes across the state, we wanted to remind you to fill yours out and send it in. The data collected by the national Census is critical to the health and well-being of Colorado kids and their families in many ways. The Census will determine how \$400 billion in federal funding gets distributed over the next ten years, including how much money will go to Colorado for essential children's programs like Head Start, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Given Colorado's current budget crunch, federal funds are more critical than ever to keep programs like these running. Census data will also be used to determine representation in Congress and helps draw district boundaries for federal and state political districts. Fortunately, this year's Census questionnaire is one of the shortest in history, containing only 10 simple questions. Please fulfill your civic duty by completing and returning your

Census questionnaire and tell your friends to do the same. It's like writing a check to your community!

Click below for more information on the US Census.

http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/census2010/publications/factsheet_community.pdf

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