



AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

May 10, 2017

The Honorable Jim Banks
United States House of Representatives
509 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Banks:

I write in support of H.R. 1921, The Head Start Improvement Act. This legislation block grants federal funds to the Head Start program to the states for education. By giving states increased flexibility over how they administer this program, your legislation encourages increased innovation and efficiency to a program that has failed to live up to its promises. All members of Congress should support this important legislation.

The Head Start program was created to provide comprehensive early childhood education services to children in families who fall below the poverty line. While the aim of the program was to ensure that these children do not begin kindergarten at an academic disadvantage, the success of the Head Start program has been mixed.

As noted in a 2012 study published by the Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start's enrollees showed varied results in their improvement of language skills, literacy, math and overall school performance as compared to their non-Head Start peers.

Currently, taxpayers across the country spend nearly \$9 billion a year on Head Start, yet states must often accede to top-down Washington control.

H.R. 1921 will improve the program by providing flexible grants that states can tailor to address the distinctive needs of their students. While the bill maintains the current level of funding, the increased flexibility to states ensures that taxpayer dollars will be spent more efficiently. In turn, this would further mitigate the academic barriers facing the children and families.

Given the finite federal resources available for this program, it is crucial they are spent efficiently. The Head Start Improvement Act does this by ensuring states are able to use funds in the most appropriate way possible. Members of Congress should have no hesitation supporting and co-sponsoring this important legislation.

Onward,

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