

## FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

Interim Report to the Oscar G. and Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation

Report Period: November 1, 2009 – July 30, 2010

### I. Impact in the Federal Early Childhood Education and Care Policy

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As the majority of states continue to face challenging fiscal environments, opportunities at the federal level could lead to significant policy gains for early childhood education and care, and families and children in poverty. During the past eight months, our efforts have been geared to:

- 1) Protect much of the increased funding from the 2009 stimulus for birth-to-five programs, such as Head Start, Early Head Start and Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and the expanded child tax credit.
- 2) Embed high-quality early learning provisions into every aspect of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization. ESEA reauthorization provides the best single opportunity to significantly increase investments in high-quality early childhood programs.

We are deeply grateful for the support from the Oscar G. and Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation, which has allowed us to intensify our policy-maker education efforts in the home states of key policy-makers, specifically Sens. Kent Conrad (D-ND), Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Rep. John Spratt (D-SC), Chairmen of relevant Budget and Appropriations Committees; and Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), Ranking Republican of the Senate Finance Committee. We are formulating a new strategy to intensify our outreach to Sen. Grassley and we will keep you updated on our progress.

### II. Progress Made Towards Our Goals

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In our proposal, we laid out the following goals to win federal investments in children:

**Goal # 1:** *Garner support for increased early education and care investments from key federal policy-makers.*

a) To help protect increased funding from the 2009 stimulus, we organized face-to-face meetings between our law enforcement leader members and key policy-makers, including:

- Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) – Senate Appropriations Committee member.
- Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) – Member of the Senate Budget Committee and the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.
- Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) – Member of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committees.
- Sen. Mark Pryor (D-AR) – Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- Rep. Allison Schwartz (D-PA) – House Ways and Means Committee member.
- Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) – Chairman of the House Budget Committee.
- Rep. David Obey (D-WI) – Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies.
- Rep. Alan Mollohan (D-WV) – Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science.

During these meetings, our members emphasized the need to invest in early childhood and care programs that will help kids get the right start in life and make our communities safer. Our members also sent letters conveying this message to nine key federal policy-makers from both chambers of Congress, including House Budget Chairman Spratt and Senate Budget Chairman Conrad. These letters were signed by 306 of our members from their states. We also spend a lot of time meeting with the staff of Members of Congress and helping our members prepare for these meetings.

b) To bolster support for the inclusion of early childhood education provisions in ESEA, we organized meeting with:

- Sen. Robert Casey (D-PA)- Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee member.
- Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY) - Ranking Member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Member of the Senate Budget and Finance Committees.
- Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) – Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.
- Rep. Michael Castle (R-DE) – Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education.
- Rep. Dale Kildee (D-MI) - House Education and Labor Committee member.
- Rep. John Kline (R-MN) – Ranking Member of the House Committee on Education and Labor.
- Rep. David Wu (D-OR) - House Education and Labor Committee member.

Our members also sent 14 sign-on letters to key policy-makers signed by 292 members from their states explaining how these changes will help improve the education system of our country and make our communities safer.

**Goal # 2:** *Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement leaders to advocate for increased quality early education investment in kids, especially among targeted key policy-makers.*

Since November, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS enlisted 140 new police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, police leaders, and violence survivors for a total membership of 5,306. As part of our recruitment efforts, we attended eight law enforcement association conferences.

**Goal # 3:** *Raise public and policy-maker awareness of the need to boost investments that help children develop into healthy adults, and make it a popular issue.*

**Iowa:** In June, our Iowa law enforcement members met with Sen. Grassley (R-IA), the ranking Republican on the Finance Committee, where they talked about the crime prevention benefits of the Child Tax Credit. The following day we held a press conference in Des Moines. That afternoon, Sen. Grassley released a public statement in support of the tax credit, saying that he was an early advocate of the Child Tax Credit and encouraging the Senate to consider the legislation this year. The *Des Moines Register* covered the story with this great Grassley quote:

*“As an early advocate for the child tax credit that was passed by a Republican-controlled Congress, and a supporter of its expansion, I hope the majority party will give the Senate a chance to consider this and other significant tax benefits set to expire at the end of the year.”*

**South Carolina:** The long-term support from the Oscar G. and Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation has allowed our members and our staff to develop a strong relationship with House Budget Chairman Spratt. In April, we held a press conference with Chairman Spratt, and four FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS members from his South Carolina district. Our members spoke about the crime reduction impact of the Child Tax Credit, and the detrimental impact on millions of low-income kids (including more than 200,000 in South Carolina) if the improvements in the stimulus for CTC are allowed to lapse at the end of this year. Chairman Spratt then pledged to fight hard for the Child Tax Credit in the Budget Committee, citing the importance of the Child Tax Credit as a crucial investment in poor kids and their families. *The Herald* published a great article about our event.

**Wisconsin:** We arranged for a FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS member from Chairman Obey’s home state to testify before the full House Appropriations Committee and the Subcommittee handling Head Start, Early Head Start, and CCDBG. Subsequently, our member and our staff met with Chairman Obey on the need to increase investments in high-quality early childhood education. We also generated an article about the testimony in a key newspaper in the Chairman’s district.