

Rep. Clack offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 40.

A resolution to memorialize the Congress of the United States to invest in Head Start and quality child care.

Whereas, Head Start and high-quality child care prepare children for school and life success by narrowing the educational achievement gap between lower- and upper-income kids, increasing high school graduation rates, and reducing crime.

Whereas, Studies show that at-risk children who attend Head Start and high-quality child care are better prepared for school. For example, Head Start narrows the literacy skills gap by nearly half between children in poverty and all children. The research is clear that quality early childhood education programs work to prevent crime. In Ypsilanti, Michigan, three- and four-year-olds from low-income families who were randomly assigned to a group that did not receive preschool preparation were five times more likely to have become chronic lawbreakers by age 27 than those who were assigned to the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation's Perry Preschool program; and

Whereas, Currently, only about half of eligible low-income children can attend Head Start due to state and federal funding limitations, and even fewer infants and toddlers. Less than five percent of eligible children three years old and younger are able to participate in Early Head Start. Moreover, only one in seven eligible children in working, low-income families receives help paying for quality child care through the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The combination of state and federal money for preschool has helped Michigan reach two of three at-risk four-year-olds and one of five at-risk three-year-olds; and

Whereas, Real dollar funding levels for Head Start and child care have been cut for the last several years, falling far behind the rising costs that programs face. Instead of reaching more eligible kids with comprehensive health, nutrition, and early education services, Head Start programs have been forced to shorten program hours, cut back staff, reduce parent coaching, and reduce transportation and other services that help families participate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to increase discretionary funding in the federal budget for 2008 by \$750 million in additional funding over current levels for Head Start and \$720 million in additional funding over current levels for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). This request does not address the unmet need in Head Start and CCDBG, but simply restores services to children to the Fiscal Year 2002 level. This is a crucial first step toward meeting the need to provide quality early childhood education and care for at-risk children. Investing in Head Start and quality child care now will improve education outcomes for our nation's at-risk children and will save lives and money down the road; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.