



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 772

Resolution condemning the Governor's proposal to eliminate programs for children with mental, developmental, and physical disabilities in pre-kindergarten, early intervention, and special education.

By Council Members López, Addabbo, Jr., Baez, Barron, Boyland, Foster, Gerson, Jackson, Koppell, Liu, Martinez, Monserrate, Perkins, Quinn, Recchia, Jr., Reed, Sanders, Jr., Seabrook, Serrano, Stewart and Vann

Whereas, Governor Pataki proposes in his State Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2003-2004 (the "Governor's Plan") to completely eliminate universal pre-kindergarten programs, which have served nearly 60,000 children at a cost of just over \$200 million in the 2002-2003 school year; and

Whereas, The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation Study (the "Study"), which was conducted over a period of thirty years in the State of Michigan, found that children, especially those with mental, developmental and physical disabilities, benefited significantly from preschool child development and special education programs, particularly when such children came from poor communities; and Whereas, According to the conclusions of the Study, which followed these children for three decades, the investment in high quality preschool education far outweighed any costs the community would face had these same children not had access to such pre-kindergarten educational programs; and

Whereas, New York State's universal pre-kindergarten program also has experienced similar success, providing all children, but especially children with disabilities, with more basic skills for success and a broader conceptual foundation, and thus enabling them to have a greater advantage in meeting the rigorous demands of the New York State Regents higher standards; and

Whereas, The Governor's Plan completely ignores the adverse impact that the elimination of universal pre-kindergarten, special education, early intervention, and other such programs will have on the development and integration of children with mental, developmental, and physical disabilities into society as productive members thereof; and

Whereas, The Governor's Plan does not provide any comparable alternatives for the pre-kindergarten or special education needs of such vulnerable children, failing to address the need to provide all children with meaningful early childhood education and sound preparation for life; and

Whereas, The Governor's Plan shows a callous disregard for the civil rights of children with disabilities, which under federal law requires that children with disabilities be taught in the most integrated setting so as not to be segregated from their peers who do not suffer from disabling conditions and from society as a whole; and

Whereas, The Governor's Plan, if implemented, will result in irreparable harm to thousands of children, particularly children who are poor or afflicted with mental, developmental, or physical disabilities, as well as to their families; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York condemns the Governor's Budget proposal to eliminate programs for children with mental, developmental, and physical disabilities in universal pre-kindergarten, early intervention, and special education.

LS#2144
MFB
3/26/03

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