



March 4, 2020

House Finance Committee

Testimony in Support of Budget Article 10 (pre-k) and Article 5, Question 3 section D (bond for child care facilities)

The Economic Progress Institute supports the articles in the Governor's Proposed FY2021 Budget which invest in early childhood education, including Article 10 which expands access to publically funded pre-k and Article 5 which proposes a \$15 million general obligation bond to finance capital projects for child care facilities.

Research clearly documents the long-term positive impact of high quality early learning for all children, and especially children from lower-income families. We support the expansion of high quality pre-K as part of building a mixed-delivery early learning system from birth to kindergarten.

And we know that an important part of achieving quality for both child care and pre-k is the physical buildings that house these program. As with much infrastructure in Rhode Island, our early learning spaces have aged and have not been maintained. Due to underfunding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) over the years, many child care programs struggle to make payroll and have no funds to improve or update their facilities. The bond will help support the community based programs for both pre-k and CCAP.