

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 245

To establish a National Commission on Educational Readiness.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 27 (legislative day, JANUARY 5), 1993

Mr. SPECTER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To establish a National Commission on Educational
Readiness.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Commission
5 on Educational Readiness Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 It is the purpose of this Act to promote and improve
8 the quality of preschool skills development by coordinating
9 efforts on behalf of public and private organizations to im-
10 prove and enhance systems of care for children and their
11 families.

1 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL READI-**
2 **NESS.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a
4 National Commission on Educational Readiness (hereafter
5 in this Act referred to as the “Commission”).

6 (b) MEMBERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE
7 COMMISSION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall con-
9 sist of 11 members, of whom—

10 (A) 2 members shall be appointed by the
11 Secretary of Education;

12 (B) 2 members shall be appointed by the
13 Secretary of Health and Human Services;

14 (C) 2 members shall be appointed by the
15 Majority Leader of the Senate in consultation
16 with the Minority Leader of the Senate;

17 (D) 2 members shall be appointed by the
18 Speaker of the House of Representatives in con-
19 sultation with the Minority Leader of the House
20 of Representatives; and

21 (E) 3 members shall be jointly selected by
22 the Majority Leader of the Senate and the
23 Speaker of the House of Representatives from
24 among individuals who have demonstrated ex-
25 pertise in areas such as early childhood develop-
26 ment, comprehensive services delivery for preg-

1 nant women, infants, toddlers, and preschool
2 children, professional teaching, or nonprofit or-
3 ganizations or foundations which work to ex-
4 pand educational opportunities for preschool
5 children, such individuals may include State or
6 local officials responsible for health and edu-
7 cation policy, parents or representatives of par-
8 ent organizations.

9 (2) CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.—The
10 Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice
11 Chairperson from among the members of the Com-
12 mission.

13 (3) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission
14 shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the
15 same manner as the original appointment was made.

16 (4) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet on
17 a regular basis, as necessary, at the call of the
18 Chairperson of the Commission or a majority of the
19 Commission's members.

20 (5) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of
21 the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the
22 transaction of business.

23 (6) TERMS.—(A) Members of the Commission
24 shall be appointed to serve for terms of 3 years, ex-
25 cept that of the members first appointed—

1 (i) 4 members shall serve for terms of 1
2 year;

3 (ii) 4 members shall serve for terms of 2
4 years; and

5 (iii) 3 members shall serve for terms of 3
6 years.

7 (B) Members may be reappointed to the Com-
8 mission.

9 (7) CONTRACTS.—To carry out this Act, the
10 Commission may enter into such contracts and other
11 arrangements to such extent or in such amounts as
12 are provided in appropriation Acts, and without re-
13 gard to the provisions of section 3709 of the Revised
14 Statutes (41 U.S.C. 5). Contracts and other ar-
15 rangements may be entered into under this para-
16 graph with or without consideration or bond.

17 (8) COMPENSATION.—Each member of the
18 Commission shall serve without compensation, but
19 shall be allowed travel expenses including per diem
20 in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by section 5703
21 of title 5, United States Code, when engaged in the
22 performance of Commission duties.

23 (9) ACTIVITY OF THE COMMISSION.—The Com-
24 mission may begin to carry out its duties under this

1 Act when at least 6 members of the Commission
2 have been appointed pursuant to paragraph (1).

3 **SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

4 The Commission shall—

5 (1) recommend a national policy designed to
6 prepare the Nation's children for formal learning,
7 including recommendations concerning appropriate
8 roles for the Federal Government, States, local gov-
9 ernments and the private sector;

10 (2) recommend to the President and the Con-
11 gress the specific changes needed within Federal
12 laws and policies to achieve an effective Federal role
13 in such preparation;

14 (3) encourage State and local initiatives on be-
15 half of children (including legislative and policy
16 changes as the Commission determines necessary)
17 and monitor progress toward school readiness;

18 (4) sponsor national, State and regional con-
19 ferences on ready to learn activities;

20 (5) establish and operate a national clearing-
21 house for the dissemination of information and ma-
22 terials on readiness to learn;

23 (6) establish an advisory council in accordance
24 with section 10;

1 (7) collaborate with specific entities involved
2 with ready to learn issues or activities such as the
3 National Ready to Learn Council, the National Edu-
4 cation Goals Panel and appropriate State ready to
5 learn activities;

6 (8) develop and maintain collaborative arrange-
7 ments with public agencies and professional and vol-
8 untary organizations that are involved in ready to
9 learn issues; and

10 (9) provide consultation and technical assist-
11 ance, or arrange for the provision of such consulta-
12 tion and technical assistance, to State and commu-
13 nity entities providing or preparing to provide inte-
14 grated comprehensive health or child development
15 services or educational services to pregnant women,
16 infants, toddlers, and preschool children.

17 **SEC. 5. REPORTS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
19 date on which all members of the Commission are ap-
20 pointed in accordance with section 3(b), the Commission
21 shall prepare and submit to the President and to the ap-
22 propriate committees of the Congress a comprehensive re-
23 port on the activities of the Commission.

24 (b) CONTENTS.—The report submitted pursuant to
25 subsection (a) shall include such findings and rec-

1 ommendations for legislation and administrative action as
2 the Commission considers appropriate based on the activi-
3 ties of the Commission.

4 (c) OTHER REPORTS.—The Commission shall pre-
5 pare and submit to the President and the Congress such
6 other reports as the Commission considers appropriate.

7 **SEC. 6. INFORMATION.**

8 The Commission may secure directly from any Fed-
9 eral agency such information, relevant to the Commis-
10 sion's functions, as may be necessary to enable the Com-
11 mission to carry out the Commission's duties. Upon re-
12 quest of the Chairman of the Commission, the head of the
13 agency shall, to the extent permitted by law, furnish such
14 information to the Commission.

15 **SEC. 7. GIFTS.**

16 The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts
17 and donations of money, services, or property, for the pur-
18 pose of aiding the activities of the Commission.

19 **SEC. 8. MAIL.**

20 The Commission may use the United States mails in
21 the same manner and under the same conditions as the
22 departments and agencies of the United States.

23 **SEC. 9. COMMISSION STAFF.**

24 (a) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall
25 appoint an executive director, who shall be paid at a rate

1 not to exceed the maximum rate of basic pay under section
2 5376 of title 5, United States Code, and such professional
3 and clerical personnel as may be reasonable and necessary
4 to enable the Commission to carry out its functions with-
5 out regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code,
6 governing appointments in the competitive service, and
7 without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and sub-
8 chapter III of chapter 53 of such title, or of any other
9 provision of law, relating to the number, classification and
10 General Schedule rates, except that no employee, other
11 than the staff director, may be compensated at a rate to
12 exceed the maximum rate applicable to level 15 of the
13 General Schedule set forth in section 5332 of title 5, Unit-
14 ed States Code.

15 (b) OTHER FEDERAL PERSONNEL.—Upon request of
16 the Chairman of the Commission, the head of any Federal
17 agency is authorized to detail, without reimbursement, any
18 personnel of such agency to the Commission to assist the
19 Commission in carrying out its duties under this Act. Such
20 detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service
21 status or privilege set forth in section 5332 of title 5,
22 United States Code.

23 **SEC. 10. ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

24 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Commission shall estab-
25 lish an advisory council (hereafter in this Act referred to

1 as the “Council”) composed of representatives of profes-
2 sional and voluntary organizations, and recognized schol-
3 ars and experts in early childhood development, education,
4 health, child advocacy and other relevant fields.

5 (b) FUNCTIONS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Council shall—

7 (A) advise the Commission regarding—

8 (i) readiness to learn;

9 (ii) the design, development and exe-
10 cution of the strategies assisted under this
11 Act; and

12 (iii) the coordination of activities as-
13 sisted under this Act, including procedures
14 to assure compliance with the provisions of
15 this Act; and

16 (B) make recommendations to the Com-
17 mission in accordance with paragraph (2).

18 (2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Council shall
19 make recommendations to the Commission regarding
20 how best to—

21 (A) promote collaboration and joint activi-
22 ties to assist communities in assuring the Na-
23 tion’s children receive the variety of supports
24 such children require to be ready for school;

1 (B) report on and promote innovative and
2 exemplary projects and programs that highlight
3 integrated, comprehensive services, including
4 how such projects and programs may be used
5 as models for replication in other communities;

6 (C) encourage and support the develop-
7 ment of State and community ready to learn
8 activities;

9 (D) monitor national progress toward the
10 National Education Goal regarding school read-
11 iness; and

12 (E) develop, exchange and disseminate in-
13 formation regarding readiness to learn.

14 **SEC. 11. APPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMIT-**
15 **TEE ACT.**

16 The provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee
17 Act shall not apply to the Commission established under
18 this Act.

19 **SEC. 12. EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.**

20 Subject to such rules as may be prescribed by the
21 Commission, the Chairman of the Commission may pro-
22 cure temporary and intermittent services under section
23 3109 of title 5, United States Code, as rates for individ-
24 uals, not to exceed the daily rate payable for level GS-

1 15 of the General Schedule set forth in section 5332 of
2 title 5, United States Code.

3 **SEC. 13. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
5 priated \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 1994 and such sums
6 as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1995 and
7 1996 to carry out the provisions of this Act.

8 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
9 to the authority of subsection (a) shall remain available
10 until expended.

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