



December 2018

Dear Representative/Senator/Governor-Elect,

Congratulations on your election. As you work together with your colleagues to put Maine on a path to future economic stability and prosperity, we hope you will keep in mind that some of the best investments Maine can make are the ones that have proven high returns down the road.

Today we are writing as members of ReadyNation, a nonprofit organization that includes more than 100 Maine business leaders committed to working to strengthen businesses across our state and our economy through proven investments focused on Maine's youngest children.

We all know that we want Maine's future to be in good hands. To ensure our future prosperity, we need to develop a strong bench – a generation of young people who can lead our businesses and our communities while growing our economy.

Today, 73 percent of all Maine children under age six have all available parents or guardians in the workforce. To support them, Maine should incentivize more high-quality child care in all areas of the state so that parents can go to work with the peace of mind about their child/children's care.

In addition to high-quality child care, we hope you will also join us in making a commitment to provide early care and education that is accessible and of high quality for Maine's three core early care and education programs: public preschool, Head Start, and home visiting.

We know that high-quality early learning programs can be very beneficial in improving academic performance and educational achievement. The programs also help students develop the skills they'll need to move on to higher education and, later, to thrive in a competitive workforce. Over the long haul, each child served in high-quality pre-K can save society a net \$34,000 on average, thanks to reduced crime, less grade repetition, less need for special education, higher high-school graduation rates, and greater future earnings.

Moreover, every dollar invested in early care and education in Maine generates an additional 78 cents over and above our initial investment. In other words, putting a dollar into an early learning program injects \$1.78 into our economy.

This is the kind of solid investment that appeals to us both as businesspeople and as Mainers who care about the future of our state.

We encourage you to work in a bipartisan fashion to expand access to and affordability of high-quality early learning programs during the 129th Legislative Session.

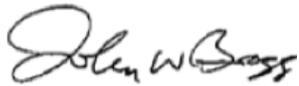
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For your information and review, please find the enclosed brief that provides a very high-level overview of the current profile of Maine's children. Thank you for your service to our great state.

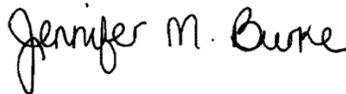
Sincerely,



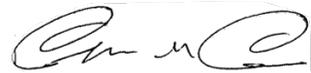
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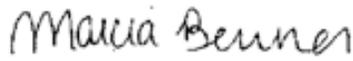
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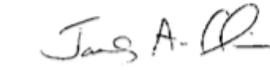
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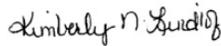
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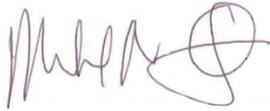
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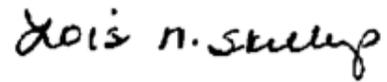
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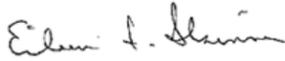
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