

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

PRESS RELEASE

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**HOUSE ADOPTS CONGRESSWOMAN HIRONO'S
AMENDMENT TO IMPROVE HEAD START**

Washington, D.C.-- Rep. Mazie Hirono today proposed an amendment on the House floor to improve the successful Head Start early childhood education programs. The amendment was adopted by a vote of 372 to 50.

“Early education is critical because it lays the foundation for positive outcomes for children and their parents,” Hirono said. “Science has shown that providing a quality early education experience leads to healthy brain development that prepares children for success in school, as well as later in life.”

Rep. Hirono’s amendment was to H.R.1429, Improving Head Start Act of 2007, which she also cosponsored. The bill provides more funding for teacher and staff salaries and professional development, and improves classroom and teacher quality. It authorizes \$450 million in new funding which would provide up to 10,000 more children access to the program.

Her amendment directs at least fifty percent of training and technical assistance funds directly to the grantees of the Early Head Start program, cutting through bureaucratic log jams. She said Head Start specialists now spend more time filling out forms than helping program directors.

“One program director said that it had been 10 months since she saw her technical assistance specialist,” Rep. Hirono said in a floor speech.

“This bill solves this problem by moving training and technical assistance responsibility away from Washington D.C. and into the hands of state and local providers,” Hirono said.

The bill includes accountability measures to ensure that Head Start funds are used appropriately and efficiently and that underperforming programs are either replaced or quickly improved.

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