

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 131

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Federal commitment to early childhood development programs should be supported by sufficient funding to meet the needs of infants and toddlers in the areas of health, nutrition, education, and child care.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 24, 1997

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Federal commitment to early childhood development programs should be supported by sufficient funding to meet the needs of infants and toddlers in the areas of health, nutrition, education, and child care.

Whereas in 1995, there were 11,800,000 children younger than age three in the United States and about one in four of these children lived in poor families (with annual incomes less than \$12,158 for a family of three);

Whereas groundbreaking scientific research shows that children's experiences during their first three years of life determine how the intricate circuitry of their brains are "wired" and lay the foundation for their future development;

Whereas failure to provide young children what they need during this period has long-term consequences and costs for the larger society;

Whereas children need certain supports such as a close and supportive relationship with their parents and other nurturing adults, good health care and adequate nutrition, good child care, and strong families with sufficient incomes to provide children with the essentials necessary for sound development during these critical years if they are to thrive and grow to be contributing adults;

Whereas in 1995, about one out of every seven children under the age of three had no health insurance and were therefore more likely to experience poorer health and to go without cost-effective preventive care, and were less likely to see a doctor;

Whereas about one out of five pregnant women in America did not get early prenatal care in 1994;

Whereas children born to mothers who do not get prenatal care are more likely to be born with dangerously low birthweight and need costly newborn care;

Whereas in 1994–1995, more than half of the States had as many as one out of every four children between 19 months and three years of age who were not fully immunized against childhood diseases;

Whereas children who are not immunized are more likely to contact preventable diseases which can cause long-term harm;

Whereas malnutrition during a child's early years has far more devastating consequences than at later points in such child's life, and can seriously inhibit children's growth and development;

Whereas low-income children are at particular risk to be severely underweight and clinically malnourished;

Whereas three out of five mothers with children younger than three were in the labor force in 1995, with many, therefore, relying on child care centers or family child care homes to care for their children while they work;

Whereas studies show children in poor quality care are more likely to have delayed cognitive and language development and prereading skills, are more likely to spend substantial amounts of unoccupied time not engaged in social interactions, are more likely to be insecurely attached to their caregivers, and are more likely to display aggression; and

Whereas child care for infants and toddlers is in short supply, with three out of four parents of young children in a national poll stating there is an insufficient supply of child care for infants in their communities: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved,*

2    **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

3        This resolution may be cited as the “Zero to Three  
4 Resolution for Early Childhood Development”.

5    **SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

6        It is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

7            (1) sufficient funding should be provided to  
8        meet the needs of infants and toddlers through—

9            (A) the Healthy Start program established  
10        under section 301 of the Public Health Service  
11        Act (42 U.S.C. 241);

1 (B) the special supplemental nutrition pro-  
2 gram for women, infants, and children (WIC)  
3 established under section 17 of the Child Nutri-  
4 tion Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);

5 (C) Head Start programs and those pro-  
6 grams under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C.  
7 9831 et seq.) that provide services for families  
8 with infants and toddlers;

9 (D) programs for infants and toddlers with  
10 disabilities under part H of the Individuals with  
11 Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1471 et  
12 seq.); and

13 (E) programs under the Child Care and  
14 Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42  
15 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.); and

16 (2) legislation should be enacted during the  
17 105th Congress to expand health insurance to pro-  
18 vide coverage for all of America's uninsured chil-  
19 dren.

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