

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2445

To establish a program to promote child literacy by making books available through early learning, child care, literacy, and nutrition programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 2, 2002

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself and Mrs. HUTCHISON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish a program to promote child literacy by making books available through early learning, child care, literacy, and nutrition programs, and for other purposes.

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 “Book Stamp Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) Literacy is fundamental to all learning.

8 (2) Between 40 and 60 percent of the Nation’s
9 children do not read at grade level, particularly chil-

1 dren in families or school districts that are chal-
2 lenged by significant financial or social instability.

3 (3) Increased investments in child literacy are
4 needed to improve opportunities for children and the
5 efficacy of the Nation’s education investments.

6 (4) Increasing access to books in the home is
7 an important means of improving child literacy,
8 which can be accomplished nationally at modest cost.

9 (5) Effective channels for book distribution al-
10 ready exist through child care providers, hospitals,
11 pediatrician’s offices, entities carrying out faith-
12 based programs, and entities carrying out early lit-
13 eracy programs.

14 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this Act:

16 (1) **EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM.**—The term
17 “early learning”, used with respect to a program,
18 means a program of activities designed to facilitate
19 development of cognitive, language, motor, and so-
20 cial-emotional skills in children under age 6 as a
21 means of enabling the children to enter school ready
22 to learn, such as a Head Start or Early Head Start
23 program carried out under the Head Start Act (42
24 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), or a State pre-kindergarten
25 program.

1 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

3 (3) STATE.—The term “State” means the 50
4 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth
5 of Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Is-
6 lands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of
7 the Northern Mariana Islands.

8 (4) STATE AGENCY.—The term “State agency”
9 means an agency designated under section 658D of
10 the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of
11 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b).

12 **SEC. 4. GRANTS TO STATE AGENCIES.**

13 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Secretary
14 shall establish and carry out a program to promote child
15 literacy and improve children’s access to books at home
16 and in early learning, child care, literacy, and nutrition
17 programs, by making books available through early learn-
18 ing programs, child care programs, hospital-based or clin-
19 ic-based literacy programs, library-based literacy pro-
20 grams, nutrition programs at clinics described in section
21 6(a)(2)(A)(v), faith-based literacy programs, and other lit-
22 eracy programs.

23 (b) GRANTS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program,
2 the Secretary shall make grants to State agencies
3 from allotments determined under paragraph (2).

4 (2) ALLOTMENTS.—For each fiscal year, the
5 Secretary shall allot to each State an amount that
6 bears the same ratio to the total of the available
7 funds for the fiscal year as the amount the State re-
8 ceives under section 6580(b) of the Child Care and
9 Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
10 9858m(b)) for the fiscal year bears to the total
11 amount received by all States under that section for
12 the fiscal year.

13 (c) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive an allot-
14 ment under this section, a State shall submit an applica-
15 tion to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
16 containing such information as the Secretary may require.

17 (d) ACCOUNTABILITY.—The provisions of sections
18 658I(b) and 658K(b) of the Child Care and Development
19 Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858g(b), 9858i(b))
20 shall apply to State agencies receiving grants under this
21 Act, except that references in those sections—

22 (1) to a subchapter shall be considered to be
23 references to this Act; and

1 (2) to a plan or application shall be considered
2 to be references to an application submitted under
3 subsection (c).

4 (e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “available
5 funds”, used with respect to a fiscal year, means the total
6 of—

7 (1) the funds made available under section
8 417(c)(1) of title 39, United States Code, for the fis-
9 cal year; and

10 (2) the amounts appropriated under section 9
11 for the fiscal year.

12 **SEC. 5. CONTRACTS TO CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND**
13 **REFERRAL AGENCIES.**

14 A State agency that receives a grant under section
15 4 shall use funds made available through the grant to
16 enter into contracts with local child care resource and re-
17 ferral agencies to carry out the activities described in sec-
18 tion 6. The State agency may reserve not more than 3
19 percent of the funds made available through the grant to
20 support a public awareness campaign relating to the ac-
21 tivities.

22 **SEC. 6. USE OF FUNDS.**

23 (a) ACTIVITIES.—

24 (1) BOOK PAYMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE PRO-
25 VIDERS.—A child care resource and referral agency

1 that receives a contract under section 5 shall use the
2 funds made available through the grant to provide
3 payments for eligible providers, on the basis of local
4 needs, to enable the providers to make books avail-
5 able to promote child literacy and improve children's
6 access to books at home and in early learning, child
7 care, literacy, and nutrition programs.

8 (2) ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.—To be eligible to re-
9 ceive a payment under paragraph (1), a provider
10 shall—

11 (A)(i) be a center-based child care pro-
12 vider, a group home child care provider, or a
13 family child care provider, described in section
14 658P(5)(A) of the Child Care and Development
15 Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
16 9858n(5)(A));

17 (ii) be a Head Start agency designated
18 under section 641 of the Head Start Act (42
19 U.S.C. 9836), an entity that receives assistance
20 under section 645A of such Act (42 U.S.C.
21 9840a) to carry out an Early Head Start pro-
22 gram, or another provider of an early learning
23 program;

24 (iii) be an entity that carries out a hos-
25 pital-based or clinic-based literacy program;

1 (iv) be an entity that carries out a library-
2 based literacy program serving children under
3 age 6;

4 (v) be an entity that carries out a nutrition
5 program at a clinic (as defined in part 246.2 of
6 title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or any
7 corresponding similar regulation or ruling))
8 under section 17(b)(6) of the Child Nutrition
9 Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)(6));

10 (vi) be an entity that carries out a faith-
11 based literacy program serving children under
12 age 6; or

13 (vii) be another entity carrying out a lit-
14 eracy program serving children under age 6;
15 and

16 (B) provide services in an area where chil-
17 dren face high risks of literacy difficulties, as
18 defined by the Secretary.

19 (b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—A child care resource and
20 referral agency that receives a contract under section 5
21 to provide payments to eligible providers shall—

22 (1) consult with local individuals and organiza-
23 tions concerned with early literacy (including par-
24 ents, teachers, pediatricians, directors of the special
25 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants,

1 and children established by section 17 of the Child
2 Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), literacy
3 coalitions, and organizations carrying out the Reach
4 Out and Read, First Book, and Reading Is Funda-
5 mental programs) regarding local book distribution
6 needs;

7 (2) make reasonable efforts to learn public de-
8 mographic and other information about local fami-
9 lies and child literacy programs carried out by the
10 eligible providers, as needed to inform the agency's
11 decisions as the agency carries out the contract;

12 (3) coordinate local orders of the books made
13 available under this Act;

14 (4) distribute, to each eligible provider that re-
15 ceives a payment under this Act, not fewer than 1
16 book every 6 months for each child served by the
17 provider for more than 3 of the preceding 6 months;

18 (5) use not more than 5 percent of the funds
19 made available through the contract to provide train-
20 ing and technical assistance to the eligible providers
21 on the effective use of books with young children at
22 different stages of development; and

23 (6) be a training resource for eligible providers
24 that want to offer parent workshops on developing
25 reading readiness.

1 (c) DISCOUNTS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Federal funds made avail-
3 able under this Act for the purchase of books may
4 only be used to purchase books on the same terms
5 as are customarily available in the book industry to
6 entities carrying out nonprofit bulk book purchase
7 and distribution programs.

8 (2) TERMS.—An entity offering books for pur-
9 chase under this Act shall be present to have met
10 the requirements of paragraph (1), absent contrary
11 evidence, if the terms include a discount of 43 per-
12 cent off the catalogue price of the books, with no ad-
13 ditional charge for shipping and handling of the
14 books.

15 (d) ADMINISTRATION.—The child care resource and
16 referral agency may not use more than 6 percent of the
17 funds made available through the contract for administra-
18 tive costs.

19 **SEC. 7. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

20 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
21 of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to Con-
22 gress a report on the implementation of the activities car-
23 ried out under this Act.

1 **SEC. 8. SPECIAL POSTAGE STAMPS FOR CHILD LITERACY.**

2 Chapter 4 of title 39, United States Code is amended
3 by adding at the end the following:

4 **“§ 417. Special postage stamps for child literacy**

5 “(a) In order to afford the public a convenient way
6 to contribute to funding for child literacy, the Postal Serv-
7 ice shall establish a special rate of postage for first-class
8 mail under this section. The stamps that bear the special
9 rate of postage shall promote childhood literacy and shall,
10 to the extent practicable, contain an image relating to a
11 character in a children’s book or cartoon.

12 “(b)(1) The rate of postage established under this
13 section—

14 “(A) shall be equal to the regular first-class
15 rate of postage, plus a differential of not to exceed
16 25 percent;

17 “(B) shall be set by the Governors in accord-
18 ance with such procedures as the Governors shall by
19 regulation prescribe (in lieu of the procedures de-
20 scribed in chapter 36); and

21 “(C) shall be offered as an alternative to the
22 regular first-class rate of postage.

23 “(2) The use of the special rate of postage established
24 under this section shall be voluntary on the part of postal
25 patrons.

1 “(c)(1) Of the amounts becoming available for child
2 literacy pursuant to this section, the Postal Service shall
3 pay 100 percent to the Department of Health and Human
4 Services.

5 “(2) Payments made under this subsection to the De-
6 partment shall be made under such arrangements as the
7 Postal Service shall by mutual agreement with such De-
8 partment establish in order to carry out the objectives of
9 this section, except that, under those arrangements, pay-
10 ments to such agency shall be made at least twice a year.

11 “(3) In this section, the term ‘amounts becoming
12 available for child literacy pursuant to this section’
13 means—

14 “(A) the total amounts received by the Postal
15 Service that the Postal Service would not have re-
16 ceived but for the enactment of this section; reduced
17 by

18 “(B) an amount sufficient to cover reasonable
19 costs incurred by the Postal Service in carrying out
20 this section, including costs attributable to the print-
21 ing, sale, and distribution of stamps under this sec-
22 tion,

23 as determined by the Postal Service under regulations that
24 the Postal Service shall prescribe.

1 “(d) It is the sense of Congress that nothing in this
2 section should—

3 “(1) directly or indirectly cause a net decrease
4 in total funds received by the Department of Health
5 and Human Services, or any other agency of the
6 Government (or any component or program of the
7 Government), below the level that would otherwise
8 have been received but for the enactment of this sec-
9 tion; or

10 “(2) affect regular first-class rates of postage
11 or any other regular rates of postage.

12 “(e) Special postage stamps made available under
13 this section shall be made available to the public beginning
14 on such date as the Postal Service shall by regulation pre-
15 scribe, but in no event later than 12 months after the date
16 of enactment of this section.

17 “(f) The Postmaster General shall include in each re-
18 port provided under section 2402, with respect to any pe-
19 riod during any portion of which this section is in effect,
20 information concerning the operation of this section, ex-
21 cept that, at a minimum, each report shall include infor-
22 mation on—

23 “(1) the total amounts described in subsection
24 (c)(3)(A) that were received by the Postal Service
25 during the period covered by such report; and

1 “(2) of the amounts described in paragraph (1),
2 how much (in the aggregate and by category) was
3 required for the purposes described in subsection
4 (c)(3)(B).

5 “(g) This section shall cease to be effective at the
6 end of the 2-year period beginning on the date on which
7 special postage stamps made available under this section
8 are first made available to the public.”.

9 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
11 this Act \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2003 through
12 2007.

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