

SENATE BILL 750

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2000 Regular Session
0lr2702
CF 0lr2322

By: **Senators Kasemeyer, Collins, Green, Frosh, Forehand, Van Hollen,
McFadden, and Roesser**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2000

Assigned to: Economic and Environmental Affairs and Budget and Taxation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education - Early Childhood Literacy - Grants**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Education to distribute certain
4 grants to certain organizations to promote literacy at an early age; requiring an
5 organization that is awarded a grant to use the grant for certain purposes;
6 requiring the Governor to include funding for the grants in the State budget;
7 authorizing the State Board to adopt certain regulations; and generally relating
8 to grants for literacy at an early age.

9 BY adding to
10 Article - Education
11 Section 5-213
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (1999 Replacement Volume)

14 **Preamble**

15 WHEREAS, There is now scientific evidence, based on studies on early brain
16 development, to support the need to promote literacy at the earliest age; and

17 WHEREAS, There is solid scientific evidence for the effectiveness of the Reach
18 Out and Read Program, developed in the Department of Pediatrics of the Boston City
19 Hospital; and

20 WHEREAS, The Program is based on pediatricians prescribing reading at each
21 well child visit and following up with a gift of the child's very own book; and

22 WHEREAS, The Program also involves reading by volunteers in the waiting
23 room; and

24 WHEREAS, The Program targets children who are not likely to own a book; and

25 WHEREAS, The Program trains pediatricians and other child health care
26 providers to promote literacy to all of their patients; and

1 WHEREAS, National book publishers participate in the Program and sell books
2 to clinics and pediatric offices at very low prices; and

3 WHEREAS, The Annie E. Casey Foundation funded the Program in 12 primary
4 care clinics in Baltimore City in 1997, but additional funding is needed to support the
5 Program in those clinics; and

6 WHEREAS, Maryland's pediatricians are seeking training and support for the
7 Program; and

8 WHEREAS, Maryland's library systems promote a program to give a library
9 card to very young children, and this program is easily incorporated in the Program;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, The Program could easily grow with corporate sponsorship,
12 allowing Maryland businesses to invest in early literacy with donations of books; now,
13 therefore,

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
15 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 **Article - Education**

17 5-213.

18 (A) THE STATE BOARD SHALL DISTRIBUTE GRANTS EACH YEAR TO
19 ORGANIZATIONS THAT:

20 (1) PROMOTE LITERACY AT AN EARLY AGE DURING WELL CHILD VISITS
21 IN A HEALTH CARE SETTING; AND

22 (2) SOLICIT THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY FOR FUNDING FOR
23 PROMOTING LITERACY AT AN EARLY AGE.

24 (B) AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS AWARDED A GRANT BY THE STATE BOARD
25 UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL USE THE GRANT TO:

26 (1) PURCHASE BOOKS TO BE DISTRIBUTED AT WELL CHILD VISITS IN
27 THE HEALTH CARE SETTING; AND

28 (2) TRAIN PEDIATRICIANS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ON
29 METHODS OF PROMOTING LITERACY TO ALL MARYLAND CHILDREN.

30 (C) IN FISCAL YEAR 2001 AND EVERY FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE
31 GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE FUNDS IN THE STATE BUDGET TO IMPLEMENT THIS
32 SECTION.

33 (D) THE STATE BOARD MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS
34 SECTION.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
2 June 1, 2000.