



**Dave Jones**

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## **JONES AND STEINBERG BILLS CREATE LARGEST PRESCHOOL/EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NATION**

SACRAMENTO —The Governor signed landmark legislation by Assemblymember Dave Jones' (D-Sacramento) creating the nation's largest pre-school and early childhood education program. Assembly Bill 2759 consolidates the administration of Title V programs that serve preschool age children. In a year when education "wins" have been hard to come by, AB 2759 is an important step to bridge the education gap without spending new general fund dollars. Schwarzenegger also signed SB 1629 by Senator Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), which establishes an Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for a quality rating scale for early education programs serving children from birth to age 5.

Jones' bill creates the California State Preschool Program by consolidating all of the current State Preschool, Prekindergarten-Family Literacy, and General Child Care and Development programs that currently serve preschool-age children. The California State Preschool Program will be the largest state-funded preschool program in the nation, will streamline the administration of state preschool programs, and will help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of early learning program administration.

"Children deserve and need quality preschool and early education programs. Doctors, parents, child development specialists, and teachers agree that children benefit greatly from quality preschool and early education programs. AB 2759 helps to reduce administrative costs and burdens and allows funding to get to where it's most needed — to provide more quality preschool and early childhood education programs to children most in need," Assemblymember Jones said. Senator Steinberg added that "If we want all California children to have a chance to succeed in school, we need to make sure that the neediest children get high-quality preschool. SB 1629 will create the roadmap for transforming our preschool programs into the high-quality experience our children deserve."

"The passage of SB 1629 and AB 2759 will establish a framework for a high quality, efficient early learning system. Both bills are fiscally responsible efforts that will ensure state investments prepare our youngest children for success in kindergarten and beyond," said Ted Lempert, President of Children Now.

Catherine Atkin, president of Preschool California, stated that "High-quality preschool is a first step in education reform. These bills will lay the groundwork for a future when all of California's children, especially those who need it most, have access to high-quality preschool."

"We hail the Governor's signature on AB 2759 and SB 1629 as a major step forward for California's children. These bills will significantly assist local child development programs in helping children and parents," said Nina Buthee, Executive Director, California Child Development Administrators Association.

The Jones and Steinberg bills are part of a package sponsored by the Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell and the other early education partners quoted above. Together, these bills will streamline funding for preschool and improve preschool quality in California.

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