



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Parker Addresses Early Childhood Education

KEVIN S. PARKER February 6, 2013

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### **Senator Parker Addresses Early Childhood Education**

*Parker introduces a legislative package addressing the early childhood education system*

(Albany, NY) Today, Senator Parker unveiled a Early Childhood Education legislative package consisting of four pieces of legislation he believes are necessary to improve New York's early childhood education system. "Investing in early childhood education is ensuring the viability

of our state, and investing in the future of our most precious resource, our children,” said Senator Parker. “That is what The National Education Association’s message was Monday during the Early Childhood Education advocacy day, and it is what all parents know.”

In his memo to his Senate colleagues requesting co-sponsorship of the package and assistance in moving the individual bills forward in the legislative process, Senator Parker underscored the message that quality early childhood education results in an increased likelihood to graduate from high school, higher salaries and greater job satisfaction, higher rates of home ownership, and even longer marriages. “In light of those overwhelming positive results, why would we not make sure our early childhood education system is the best?,” asked Parker.

Legislation in this proposed package includes:

- Establishing the Universal Prekindergarten Program (UPK) as a State-funded program that provides educationally-based high-quality prekindergarten to four year old children.

(Parker/Nolan S.1570)

- Requiring the Department of Labor to conduct a study of the economic impact that the child care industry has had on the state economy. This bill includes an analysis of the number of workers directly employed at childcare and early education facilities, a determination as to the gross receipts of the industry, the value of goods and services purchased by the child care and early education industry and the amount of federal dollars flowing to the state for child care and early education. The study will also evaluate the degree to which available child care and early education enables parents to work outside of the home and earn income, enable parents to attend educational programs, decreases absenteeism at work and attracts businesses to New York State. (Parker/Gibson S.3503/A.631).

- Codifying the authority for school health demonstration projects to conduct projects for the purpose of providing expanded school health services for pre-school and school-age children. (Espaillat S.1826)

- Requiring persons operating motor vehicles transporting children less than school age, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to and from a pre-school or nursery school or school activities to comply with the requirements of Article 19-A of the Vehicle and Traffic Law (which imposes requirements such as criminal history background checks, driver qualifications, examinations and tests, and disqualification from operation). (Gantt A.1418)

“I have tailored the bills in this package to encourage high-quality universal early childhood education,” the Senator continued. “As a community, we must work in partnership to ensure that every child in New York is well equipped to excel in this global economy.”

“Effective support services in early education are paramount to ensuring our kids stay in school, excel in school, and are able to pursue their dreams,” said Senator Espaillat (D – 31). “By integrating and strengthening preventive health services into our schools, we can keep our children healthy and focused on their studies. Working together, we can build a more holistic school environment that takes into account all of our children’s needs and empowers educators to help them succeed in life.”

“I am proud to introduce and cosponsor legislation that will improve early childhood education for all our children,” says Senator Parker. “I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to pass this legislative package,” he continued.

About Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse community in the heart of Brooklyn that consists of 318,000 constituents in Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope. He is the Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, Assistant Democratic Leader for Intergovernmental Affairs, and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.

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