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On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee  
On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5515

Two of my three children have received and continue to receive support through Early Intervention (EI) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).

At age 3, my daughter was barely speaking. In any given sentence, she strung together only a couple of words from her limited vocabulary, which was widely supported by gestures and hand motions. She was greatly behind her peers, and her limited communication affected our daily lives through misunderstandings and explosive tantrums. I was worried about her readiness for school, and didn't know how to support her language development. With support from Emily, an ECSE speech language pathologist (SLP), my daughter's vocabulary grew and today they continue to work together to improve her pronunciation of difficult consonant sounds. We've seen a reduction of behavioral problems as her communication has developed and I feel confident about her readiness for kindergarten this fall.

Before the age of 1, my son was already displaying similar language delays. Because of our previous experience with his older sister, we knew he would benefit from Early Intervention (EI). Through twice-monthly home visits, his speech language pathologists, Courtney and later on, Rain, helped him develop new sounds and words, and eventually develop complex sentences. He was always excited to work with his SLPs because they made the visits engaging for his age and interests. At age 3, our son has aged out EI and now works with Emily, who our family became familiar with through her work with our daughter.

Our family has greatly benefited through EI/ECSE programs. Not only should these programs continue to receive funding, they need to be expanded. My son still lags significantly behind his peers in the sounds he utilizes in spoken words. With an articulation score in the 7th percentile, he *\*barely\** made the cut to continue receiving services through ECSE. In other parts of the country, similar programs support children who fall below the 35th percentile with twice weekly home visits compared to the twice monthly visits we receive here. With greater funding and resources, EI/ECSE could support not just more children but they could support these children better with more regular home visits.