

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1220  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
MARCH 14, 2007**

Dear Senator Handley and Representative Sayers (Chairs) and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Birth to Three legislation, SB 1220, that adds funding to restore and expand eligibility to the levels that existed three years ago. This would make children born prematurely weighing under 1000 grams and 28 weeks or under gestation automatically eligible for B-3 services. It would also once again support eligibility for young children who have significant speech delays paired with biological risk factors. The proposed budget would also add funding to expand eligibility to children with mild or unilateral hearing loss.

In the past 3 years since eligibility was tightened or eliminated for these groups, a number of children have not received the services that they have needed. Although the Follow Along Plan program was instituted to monitor this population, these children would have benefited more from direct services. A number of these children when re-evaluated several months after their initial evaluation became eligible for services because their delays had increased.

Providing funding to restore eligibility to these groups of children will help ensure that no child falls between the cracks by being denied intervention services.

Thank you for your consideration,

Peter Gacek,  
State School Teacher in  
DMR Early Connections