Pediatric Associates of Farmington, LLC

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January 25, 2015

Good afternoon Senator Bye and members of the Committee on Children. We are writing today as the medical providers at Pediatric Associates of Farmington to lend our support to Senate Bill 209, An Act Concerning Funding for the Reach Out and Read Program.

Pediatric Associates of Farmington is proud to participate in the Reach Out and Read Program in an effort to promote early literacy and foster a love of reading. Reach Out and Read prepares America's youngest children to succeed in school by partnering with medical providers to prescribe reading as part of a healthy lifestyle. Thanks to the Reach Out and Read Program, each child starts kindergarten with a home library of approximately 10 developmentally appropriate books and a parent who has heard at every well-child visit about the importance of early literacy skills and reading aloud together.

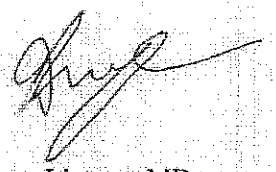
Reach Out and Read is an important part of our practice by helping us discuss early literacy skills and encouraging parents to read aloud to their children every day. This wonderful program helps support the message that books and reading are not only important for all children but a fun activity in their lives. Our patients and their parents look forward to every physical exam because it means that they are going to receive a new book to bring home. One mother told us that after her son received a book about Biscuit the dog at his 3 year old checkup he would not put it down. She had never seen him so excited about reading. He begged them to get him more Biscuit books and they were happy to do so to further encourage him to read. He has now read every one of the Biscuit the dog books they have been able to find and continues his love of reading.

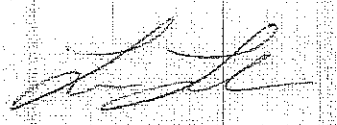
There is nothing more important to a child's well-being than regular checkups starting at an early age. By using the Reach Out and Read model starting at the age of 6 months, we have the opportunity to encourage reading at these early checkups and develop a strong foundation for our patient's education. The earlier we can get children interested in reading, the better they will do in elementary school. Families served by Reach Out and Read have been shown to read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten with larger vocabularies and stronger language skills.

The mission of Reach Out and Read is to make books and literacy guidance a routine part of a child's medical care so that they grow up with a love of reading and a strong foundation as they start school. This is a mission that we feel very strongly about as pediatric primary care providers. Our children deserve nothing less.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,





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