

February 28, 2002

Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan
Yale University
310 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Dear Dr. Kagan:

I have been fortunate to hear you speak on several occasions. My impression of your work and your knowledge in designing early childhood care and education systems as outlined in a paper provided to me by Dr. Cathy Grace has led me to contact you and your team. Dr. Grace has provided me with a copy of the research brief "Financing Universal Early Care and Education for America's Children Project" and explained the process that states are to follow in inviting you to work with them in establishing universal funding for an early childhood care and education system.

As Governor of Mississippi, I would like to officially extend an invitation to you and your team to work with the citizens of our state in developing a viable system of early care and education that addresses the unique needs of young children in Mississippi and those caring for children in all types of care environments. We are in desperate need of high quality care and education settings for all of our children, but of special concern are the thousands living in poverty or on the brink of poverty that are spending time in questionable care settings. It is our hope that you will share your expertise with all pertinent agency directors and policy makers during the project.

I am designating Kelly Riley (601-359-2528) of my staff to work with you in acquiring the information you will need to complete your work. It is my understanding that Dr. Grace has spoken with you and is attempting to secure the needed funding for the project. Please continue to communicate with her during this initial phase.

I hope that you will seriously consider working with Mississippi, as our children deserve the best. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr