

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1109

WHEREAS, we, the members of the Missouri Senate, regard early intervention literacy programs as essential in meeting the needs of our state's young children; and

WHEREAS, Reading Recovery and early literacy programs provide children who potentially may become poor readers the vital assistance needed to become successful readers; and

WHEREAS, the Reading First Program is one of the new funding sources in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed by the U.S. Congress in December of 2001; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education is responsible for administering the Reading First Program and recently issued "Reading First Draft Guidance 2/1/02" for implementation of the Program; and

WHEREAS, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) authorizes Reading First funds for instruction in both classroom and nonclassroom settings, the draft guidelines limit funding to classroom use only; and

WHEREAS, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) does not mandate a format base on time for providing reading instruction, the draft guidelines provide for uninterrupted 90-minute instruction periods per day; and

WHEREAS, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) permits states to use funding for professional development in early intervention, the draft guidelines removes professional development as eligible use of Reading First funds; and

WHEREAS, the proposed draft guidelines jeopardize use of Reading First Funds for early intervention of low achieving readers and potentially undermines state and local school decisions about early intervention reading programs:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Missouri Senate, Ninety-first General Assembly, Second Regular Session, recognize the significance of early intervention for young struggling readers and urge Congress to instruct the Department of Education to fully fund literacy programs as provided by "Reading First" legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for every member of the Missouri Congressional Delegation.