



**A SURE BET ON LOUISIANA'S FUTURE**  
**Commit Sports Betting Revenues to Early Care and Education**

What if there were a sure thing bet that improved education, created a strong business environment, and guaranteed a bright future? You would go for it, right? Louisiana, though, is in danger of passing on this great opportunity.

What is this bet and how do we get in on it? It's early care and education for children under four, and part of the money needed for it could be committed to it if the Legislature would take this smart bet. In November 2020, Louisianians in 55 parishes legalized sports betting with the idea that the monies generated would go towards education. Rather than committing the money to a specific need, the legislature is considering directing them into the general fund where money may or (more likely) may not go towards early childcare, which now receives less than 1% of our general funds.

What does early care and education have to do with economic development? In a word--everything. You may think that early childhood is a parental and not a government problem. But keep in mind that 2/3 of children under five have either both parents or their single parent in the workforce. These parents must find a place for their children even though the cost of childcare in Louisiana is almost as much as that of public college tuition. And affording quality childcare is critical. Ninety percent (90%!!) of brain development happens between birth and age five. If children don't get the learning and stimuli needed during these critical years, they start kindergarten behind and tend to remain behind.

Without affordable, quality childcare, parents fall behind too. Parents rely on childcare to go to work, school, job training, or to look for new work. Businesses locate in strong educational environments because they have access to better workers and lower absenteeism. The trickledown effect of a weak early childcare system is significant but investing in early childcare can break this cycle. Dr. James Heckman, a Nobel prize winning economist from the University of Chicago, found that investing in early childcare yields up to a 13% return on investment while the average stock market return is 9.2%.

Let's bet on Louisiana's greatest resource—our children. Call your legislators and request that they commit sports betting revenue to early childcare and education!

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