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**CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZES FEDERAL FUNDING TO PROVIDE
1,100 MORE EARLY HEAD START SLOTS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS**

City Council today passed a substitute ordinance amending the 2015 Annual Appropriation Ordinance for Fund 925 grants, which includes more \$15 million dollars in federal funding that will allow the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) to provide 1,100 additional Early Head Start slots for Chicago's infants and toddlers.

"A high-quality early start to learning is critical to the future success of our children," said Mayor Emanuel. "We implemented a full day of kindergarten and continue to invest in early learning opportunities so that all children, across every neighborhood in Chicago, are prepared at every level from cradle to career and a bright future."

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will provide \$15,275,333 through the 2015 Early Head Start Childcare Partnership Grant, the largest amount of any city in the country.

Early Head Start programs provide comprehensive services that benefit children, families, and teachers, including: health, developmental and behavioral screenings; higher health, safety and nutrition standards; increased professional development opportunities for teachers; and increased parent engagement opportunities.

Providing childhood learning opportunities remains a priority for the Emanuel Administration. After taking office in 2011, Mayor Emanuel established the Early Childhood Education Task Force to overhaul the City's programs; serve the most at-risk children in high-quality programs; and increase transparency and accountability of the City and individual programs.

Mayor Emanuel also announced in January that the City of Chicago has been awarded \$600 million for early childhood education programming over the next five years. While peer cities such as New York and Los Angeles were asked to re-compete for their share of funding, HHS renewed Chicago's Head Start Funding due to the strength of the city's programs.

Parents interested in enrolling their children in early learning programs should visit chicagoearlylearning.org for more information.

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