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## Press Releases

### For Immediate Release

March 25, 2009

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### Quality Pre-Kindergarten Wins Bipartisan Support of Lieutenant Governors

Testimony at NLGA Winter Meeting by Pew's Pre-K Now campaign highlights research on benefits

Washington, D.C. (March 25, 2009) -- The country's lieutenant governors are joining the growing chorus of Americans – including military and law enforcement officials, economists, teachers, doctors, religious leaders and parents – working to prioritize public investments in high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all children. Members of the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) passed a resolution pledging support for pre-k at their recent Winter Meeting in Washington, DC. At the meeting, Danielle Gonzales, project manager of Pre-K Now, a campaign of the Pew Center on the States, provided testimony to the lieutenant governors highlighting the substantial body of research showing the benefits of quality pre-k.

Co-authored by Lt. Gov. Barbara O'Brien (D-CO) and Lt. Gov. Jack Dalrymple (R-ND), the resolution passed without a dissenting vote at the meeting, a reflection of the growing bipartisan support across the nation for making evidence-based policy decisions in the area of early education.

"States face tough choices right now," said Lt. Gov. O'Brien. "We need to put our limited resources where they do the most good, and pre-k is clearly a smart investment."

"I am very happy to support NLGA's resolution," added Lt. Gov. Michael Fedele (R-CT). "It's part of a sound strategy to ensure our children's success across the nation. By continuing to invest in these programs, our kids will enter school ready to learn and, as adults, will enter their professional careers ready to contribute."

In testimony supporting the resolution, Pew's Pre-K Now highlighted research findings demonstrating that quality pre-k consistently yields both short- and long-term benefits to children and communities, and underscored that policy makers can expect a guaranteed return on investment when states ensure young

children enter school ready to learn and thrive. Research has shown that children who complete quality pre-k programs are more likely to graduate, have greater lifetime earnings, pay more tax dollars back to state and local governments, are less likely to be arrested by age 19, and are more likely to lead healthy lifestyles.

“Given unprecedented budget challenges, state leaders must dedicate funding to proven, cost-effective programs,” said Danielle M. Gonzales, project manager for Pre-K Now at the Pew Center on the States. “High-quality pre-k has been one of the most rigorously researched education strategies of the last 40 years. We know it works for both children and taxpayers.”

Thirty-eight states currently have state-funded pre-k programs, with more than \$5.2 billion invested nationally, serving more than 46,000 children.

The support of lieutenant governors, who play a leading role in state legislatures and in promoting sound economic development policies, is critical to advancing quality pre-k. Co-sponsors for the resolution included Lieutenant Governors John Bohlinger of Montana, Bill Bolling of Virginia, Anthony Brown of Maryland, Diane Denish of New Mexico, Michael Fedele of Connecticut, Jim Folsom of Alabama, Gregory Francis of the Virgin Islands, John Garamendi of California, Patty Judge of Iowa, Barbara Lawton of Wisconsin, Daniel Mongiardo of Kentucky, Tim Murray of Massachusetts, Mark Parkinson of Kansas, Elizabeth Roberts of Rhode Island, and Secretary of State Max Maxfield of Wyoming.

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*The Pew Center on the States identifies and advances state policy solutions. Pre-K Now, a campaign of the Pew Center on the States, collaborates with advocates and policymakers to lead a movement toward high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all three and four year olds.*

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