

June 11, 2001

Ms. Sheri Lacy  
ZERO TO THREE  
2000 M Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Lacy:

Please consider this letter as one of support for Dr. Bonita Coleman-Potter to participate in The State Early Childhood Policy Leadership Forum.

Dr. Potter's educational background and leadership have led to the formation of a systemic reform model that seeks to address readiness and reading skills in our state's youth. In her current position, she coordinates the Mississippi Department of Education's early childhood and reading efforts and serves as the Department's liaison to the Legislature, as well as the spokesperson on this topic to the varying partnerships that our state has formed to address the needs of early childhood.

Mississippi suffers from demographics and poverty/illiteracy rates that negatively affect the early childhood population. Dr. Potter shares in the overall vision that every child enters school healthy, ready to learn and socially developed. She has worked to form partnerships to address these issues. From this collaboration, parties have begun the process of refocusing their efforts on the devastating effect of poverty's grasp on the lives of our children. In addition, Dr. Potter serves on the state's Interagency Literacy Council, which is composed of all state agencies and has as its focus, the blending and leveraging of services. The Council also serves as a communication force and seeks to help each state agency keep education at the forefront of its priorities.

Thank you for your consideration of Dr. Potter's application. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr