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### Md. is ready to extend early education to all

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Congratulations to The Baltimore Sun on the editorial about the tremendous benefits of pre-kindergarten programs and Head Start ("Nurturing young minds," Dec. 29).

Readers and state leaders should also understand that Maryland is in prime position to use new federal funding for these early care and education programs. To borrow a phrase currently in vogue, pre-K expansion is "shovel ready" in Maryland.

A state-level task force has established principles for voluntary universal pre-K programs across the state. A follow-up "Preschool for All" business plan provides a blueprint for implementing those principles. Legislation will be introduced in the coming General Assembly session to move Maryland further toward this goal.

As the editorial notes, the long-term benefits of pre-K make it a wise investment, especially when tight budgets demand choices between competing priorities. Clinton MacsherryBaltimore

The writer is director of public policy for the Maryland Committee for Children.

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