



**FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**  
*The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida*

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**Testimony regarding Proposed Committee Bill PCB EDC 14-01 and early learning**

Provided during House Education Committee Meeting

Comments by James B. Herzog

Thursday, Feb. 20, 2014

Good morning, Madame Chair and Committee Members:

My name again is James Herzog and I serve as Associate Director for Education at the Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Conference represents 111 VPK (Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program) schools and 3,170 VPK students served in those schools.

We appreciate the open-door policy by the House Education Committee and feedback opportunities provided this year and last. The bill clarifies and strengthens reasonable health and safety checks.

Going forward, we ask that the Legislature take a look at level II screening. Some of our teachers go through DCF (the Department of Children and Families) while others go through DOE (the Department of Education).

We also advocate for an increase to the Base Student Allocations for VPK. Governor Scott himself has called for a \$100 per child increase.

Thank you.