

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14 of the Texas Constitution, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove of and veto House Bill No. 130 of the 81st Texas Legislature, Regular Session, due to the following objections:

House Bill No. 130 would create a grant program to enable eligible school districts to implement or continue full-day pre-kindergarten programs. Eligibility would be limited to districts whose third grade students have scored above the state average on the reading portion of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for the past three years. Of those eligible districts, any previous recipients of pre-kindergarten grant funding from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) would receive funding priority.

With limited state resources dedicated to pre-kindergarten, grant money should be directed to districts with the greatest academic need. State funding should also be directed to programs demonstrating the most efficiency, thereby benefiting the largest number of Texas students.

Pursuant to my veto of House Bill No. 130 and approval of the state budget, the \$25 million appropriated for House Bill No. 130 should be used to expand the number of students served by the existing grant program. As a result, TEA will be equipped to provide assistance to half-day pre-kindergarten programs in districts whose third graders have scored below the state average on the reading portion of TAKS for the past three years.

Under the funding formula for the existing grant program, \$25 million would serve more than 27,000 students over the next biennium, which is 21,000 students more than the estimated 6,800 students that would have been served under the bill's proposed program – or a 305 percent increase. Expanding our current grant program, rather than creating an additional pre-kindergarten program, will serve more students with greater needs.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have signed my name officially and caused the Seal of the State to be affixed hereto at Austin, this the 19th day of June, 2009.

RICK PERRY

Governor of Texas

ATTESTED BY:

COBY SHORTER, III

Deputy Secretary of State