



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Honorable Martin Meehan
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

JUN 11 1999

Dear Congressman Meehan:

It was a pleasure speaking to you regarding your concerns about the status of continued Federal funding for Massachusetts under Part C of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (Part C), and specifically, the Professional Center for Handicapped Children day program in Andover. This is to follow-upon our conversation.

You asked if it was the Department's intention to withhold Federal funding to the Massachusetts early intervention program and close the developmental day care programs in the State. As I mentioned in our conversation, a general principle of Part C is to support children and families where they would normally be and to try to prevent children from being separated from their families. The law requires that infants and toddlers receive early intervention services in natural environments appropriate for the individual child and his or her family. Since the law requires that decisions about service provision be individualized, a natural environment for one child may not be a natural environment for another child. As long as Massachusetts ensures that early intervention services are provided consistent with Part C, the Department will not contemplate terminating Federal funds to the State. At this time, the Department is not considering terminating Federal Part C funds to Massachusetts.

My staff and I are available to provide technical assistance to support your efforts. Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention. Sincerely,

Thomas Hehir
Director
Office of Special Education
Programs

cc: Ron Benham