

STATE OF DELAWARE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

TATNALL BUILDING, SECOND FLOOR WILLIAM PENN STREET, DOVER, DE 19901

Charles, Stephanic & Mangaret

JACK A. MARKELL GOVERNOR PHONE: 302-744-4101 FAX: 302-739-2775

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Representative Potter, Representative Bolden & Sen. Henry:

I want to thank you again for your leadership on improving the lives of Wilmington school children. Your efforts, those of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, and those of many of your colleagues in the House and Senate represent the most significant effort in decades focused on improving the education opportunities of Wilmington's young people. I am proud to have worked alongside you in these efforts. While the work has not been easy, I think we all agree that improving the education of Wilmington's children is one of the more worthwhile things we can do in public service.

I expect to support this effort throughout my administration. Next January, I will release a recommended budget for consideration by the General Assembly.

I am pleased to commit that I will recommend appropriation of funds necessary and sufficient to fund the first year of implementation of the proposals of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, an amount that all presently agree to be no less than \$7.5 million.

By including these funds in my recommended budget, I will be asking the General Assembly, and specifically the Joint Finance Committee, to continue work on the plan of the WEIC.

There is no doubt in my mind that it would have been better if the WEIC plan had been implemented and fully funded this year. I believe that the best way to continue this important work into next year is if this year the General Assembly affirms the work of the State Board of Education and WEIC and commits to considering WEIC's redistricting plan next year — when it will have my complete support and the recommended funding to make a difference for Wilmington's kids.

Sincerely,

Jack A. Markell