Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Violence Prevention Training for Early Childhood Educators Act.

Students, parents, teachers and members of communities across our country have been grappling with the issue of school violence. There is no magic solution to this difficult matter, there is no single cause that can be addressed to guarantee our schools will be violence-free. However, I believe that to effectively address this issue we must ensure that those who are entering careers in early childhood development and education are properly trained in violence prevention.

The legislation that my colleagues and I are introducing today will authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants ranging from $500,000 to $1,000,000 to institutions of higher learning and other facilities in order to assist them in making violence prevention training available to prospective teachers and those returning for additional professional development. Moreover, the bill will ensure that teachers, school counselors and child care providers are provided with the skills necessary to prevent violent behavior in young children at the very earliest stages.

In 1992, Congress enacted legislation which funded similar training programs at Eastern Connecticut State University, University of Colorado at Denver, University of Kansas, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina, Temple University and a dozen other colleges and universities.

There is evidence that strongly suggests that early intervention and education is effective in preventing delinquency. For example, one study has indicated that when preschool teachers instruct young children about interpersonal problem-solving skills and other forms of conflict resolution, children are less likely to demonstrate problematic behavior, which is effective in preventing delinquency later on. In addition, there is further evidence that indicates that support programs for families with very young children—those under the age of five—are effective in preventing delinquency.

Teachers are on the frontline every day. They need to be prepared to discuss with the children and the entire family how to resolve issues without resorting to violence. I believe we must reinvest in this proven, worthwhile issues without resorting to violence. I believe that to effectively address this issue we must ensure that those who are entering careers in early childhood development and education are properly trained in violence prevention.

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