

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Preschool Children and D.A. Seth Williams Vote “Yes” for Universal Pre-K**

**PHILADELPHIA** (May, 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015) – High-quality pre-k is not available to two-thirds of preschool age children in Philadelphia, according to research from Public Citizens for Children and Youth. Philadelphia voters can put the city on track to provide high-quality pre-k for all children by voting “yes” on ballot question four in Tuesday’s primary.

#### **Background on Ballot Question 4:**

Philadelphia City Council voted unanimously to approve ballot question 4 last February. The question reads: *Shall the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to provide for the creation, appointment, powers and duties of an independent Commission on Universal Pre-Kindergarten which would recommend an implementation and funding plan for achieving universal high quality pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds in Philadelphia without taking away funds used for existing education?*

The proposed amendment would create a new Commission to develop both an implementation and funding plan to provide high-quality prekindergarten for every three-and four-year-old child in Philadelphia. The Commission would consist of 17 members, including public officials and members appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The Commission is required to make recommendations that would not decrease existing funding for education. City Council is required to consider any funding plan recommended by the Commission. If Council fails to adopt the Commission’s recommendations, then the Commission will reconvene each year until Council grant approval.

District Attorney R. Seth Williams joined children from Friends Child Care Center at City Hall Monday to hold a mock vote in favor of ballot question four which creates a commission to study and develop a plan for universal pre-k in Philadelphia.

“As a prosecutor, it is my job to fight crime and the best way to fight crime is to put children on the path to success during their early years so they are less prone to trouble later in life,” said District Attorney Williams. “The evidence is clear: giving children access to high-quality pre-k now will lead to safer, thriving communities in the future. That’s why I support ballot question 4 and universal pre-k for Philadelphia.”

Public Citizens for Children and Youth led the charge to get the universal pre-k question on the ballot by collecting thousands of petitions from voters and delivering them to City Council last February. PCCY also handed out fliers to voters all over the city telling them to vote “Yes on 4” this Tuesday.

“This ballot question is a historic opportunity for Philadelphia,” said Donna Cooper, executive director of PCCY. “We know for a fact that when children can access high-quality pre-k, more often than not they grow up to become success adults. Unfortunately high-quality pre-k remains out of reach for far too many children in our city and it’s about time we finally do something about it. It starts with voters saying ‘yes’ to question four.”

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