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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE

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Sen. Van de Putte Joins Mayor Castro and Other San Antonio and Texas Leaders for Texas Early Learning Innovation Summit

(Austin) — On Friday, April 5, the media and public are invited to join state Senator Leticia Van de Putte (District 26, Bexar County) for the Texas Early Learning Innovation Summit, to be held at the University of Texas at San Antonio's Downtown campus, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Senator Van de Putte is proud to co-host this groundbreaking event with San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro; San Antonio state Representatives Mike Villarreal and Justin Rodriguez; Dr. Harriett Romo, Director of UTSA's Child & Adolescent Policy Research Institute; and Ilene Rosenthal, CEO of Footsteps2Brilliance, Inc., an early learning education platform that allows students, teachers and parents to access game-based early learning content from any mobile device or computer.

The summit will focus on how to create *Model Innovation Cities*, both statewide and nationally, that use an innovative citywide approach to ensure that all children, no matter their socio-economic status, read proficiently by third grade. For example, several superintendents will share how they are using mobile technology to scale early learning solutions citywide; these superintendents are sending early learning curriculum into their parents' mobile devices to help them become their children's first teachers.

In addition to superintendents, panels will include board members from Pre-K 4 SA, San Antonio's new, voter-approved initiative to move thousands of underserved children into early learning, and corporate representatives discussing public-private partnerships to make these policies happen.

"Research shows that early learning gives children the head start they need to become engaged learners throughout their educational life," said Senator Van de Putte. "This summit will bring together all the elements needed to make early learning innovations happen, from the educational, policy, and private sectors, all converging on the same goal — allowing our students to reach their full potential."

"San Antonio is a model for the nation when it comes to a city-wide approach for ensuring that all children have the opportunity to thrive educationally," said Ilene Rosenthal, CEO of

Footsteps2Brilliance®, Inc. “The key is to operationalize and scale best early learning practices on a city-wide basis. Since over 80% of parents own smart phones today, mobile technology can be a game changer that will allow cities to cost-effectively scale early learning solutions to all members of their community.”

For further details, see the attached agenda, or contact Lee Nichols (Senator Van de Putte’s staff) at Lee.Nichols@senate.state.tx.us or Eugene Narciso, Chief Operating Officer of Footsteps2 Brilliance®, Inc. at eugene@footsteps2brilliance.com

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