

September 6, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the just more than 400 national, state and local undersigned organizations, we are writing to express support for and urge passage of H.R. 5456, the Family First Prevention Services Act. This bipartisan legislation passed the House of Representatives in June with overwhelming support. It is now time for the Senate to act. The legislation would strengthen families so more children could remain safely with their parents and family caregivers and avoid the need for foster care. Children do best in families and this legislation represents an historic step toward better aligning federal child welfare policy with this goal.

We represent advocates for children, youth and families, public and private providers, foster parents, adoptive parents, kinship caregivers and alumni of foster care. We applaud the Act's steps to provide federal investments in evidence-based prevention and early intervention to keep more children safely with their parents and family caregivers and out of foster care. Specifically, the Act would allow states to access federal funding under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act for quality mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services and in-home parent skill-based programs. These and other provisions in the Act would support states and communities in responding to the national opioid crisis, which has increased child welfare caseloads and left thousands of families and children vulnerable.

The Family First Prevention Services Act also aims to better ensure family-based care for children who need foster care. The legislation builds on current law's policy specifying that children should be placed in the least restrictive, most family-like setting appropriate for their special needs. Three years after its enactment federal dollars will be targeted only on children in family-foster homes or qualified residential settings for children and youth with special treatment needs or on those in special circumstances, such as pregnant and parenting teens or older youth in supervised independent living settings.

We urge you to take action on this important legislation by September 30, the end of the federal fiscal year. Senate passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act will truly benefit vulnerable children and families who come to the attention of child welfare systems. Thank you.

Sincerely,

***National Organizations:***

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors  
Academic Pediatric Association  
Adopt America Network  
Adoption Exchange Association  
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families

American Academy of Nursing  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Art Therapy Association  
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy  
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Orthopsychiatric Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Beyond Adoptions, Inc.  
Brazelton Touchpoints Center  
Bridges International  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center for Native American Youth  
Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Child Care Aware® of America  
Children and Family Futures  
Children's Home Society of America  
Children's Hospital Association  
Children's Rights  
Children's Advocacy Institute  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Leadership Council  
CLASP  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Comfort Consults, LLC  
CSH (Corporation for Supportive Housing)  
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption  
Eating Disorders Coalition  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Every Child Matters  
Family Focused Treatment Association  
Family Voices  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Foster Care Alumni of America  
FosterClub  
Generations United  
Girls Inc.  
Healthy Families America  
Healthy Teen Network  
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI USA)  
Juvenile Law Center  
Lutheran Services in America  
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals  
National Adoption Center

National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.  
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds  
National Association for Children of Alcoholics  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Counsel for Children  
National Association of Drug Court Professionals  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors  
National Center for Youth Law  
National Center on Adoption and Permanency  
National Center on Child Welfare and Housing  
National Center on Shared Leadership®  
National Child Abuse Coalition  
National Children's Alliance  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence  
National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association  
National Family Preservation Network  
National Foster Parent Association  
National Foster Youth Institute  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Indian Child Welfare Association  
National Indian Health Board  
National Kinship Alliance for Children  
National Latino Children's Institute  
National Network for Youth  
National Register of Health Service Psychologists  
National Respite Coalition  
North American Council on Adoptable Children  
Nurse-Family Partnership  
Parents Anonymous® Inc.  
Parents as Teachers  
Peace Educators Allied for Children Everywhere (P.E.A.C.E.)  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Pressley Ridge  
Prevent Child Abuse America  
RaiseAChild  
Ray E. Helfer Society  
Results For America  
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law  
School Social Work Association of America  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Strengthening Families All Across America  
The Adoption Exchange, Inc.  
The Arc  
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
The Children's Village  
The Kempe Foundation  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy  
The National Crittenton Foundation  
The RISE Institute

Think of Us  
Treatment Communities of America  
Voice for Adoption  
Youth Law Center  
Youth Villages  
Zepeda Learning and Leadership  
ZERO TO THREE

***State Organizations:***

*Alaska*

Alaska Children's Trust  
American Academy of Pediatrics, Alaska Chapter

*Alabama*

Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Family Focused Treatment Association  
Seraaj Family Homes  
Youth Villages - Alabama  
VOICES for Alabama's Children

*Arkansas*

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families  
Arkansas Association for Infant Mental Health  
Arkansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

*Arizona*

American Academy of Pediatrics - Arizona Chapter  
Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents  
Arizona Council of Human Service Providers  
Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation  
Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors  
Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services  
Arizona Partnership for Children LLP  
Arizona's Children Association  
Casa de los Niños  
Child and Family Resources Inc.  
Child Crisis Arizona  
Children's Action Alliance  
Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth  
Coconino County Education Service Agency  
Family Involvement Center  
Human Resource Training, Inc.  
Jewish Family & Children's Service

National Association of Social Workers, Arizona Chapter  
Prevent Child Abuse Arizona  
Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition  
RISE Services, Inc.  
Southern Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors/Tucson  
Southwest Human Development, Inc.  
Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development  
UMOM New Day Centers  
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition

*California*

American Academy of Pediatrics, California  
American Academy of Pediatrics - California Chapter 1  
American Academy of Pediatrics - California Chapter 2  
American Academy of Pediatrics - California Chapter 3  
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Programs Executives  
Center Point, Inc.  
Children's Defense Fund - California  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles  
Extended Child Care Coalition of Sonoma County  
Fair Trade LA  
Family Preservation Community Services  
Girls Inc. of Alameda County, CA  
Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, CA  
Girls Inc. of Greater Los Angeles, CA  
Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara, CA  
Girls Inc. of Orange County, CA  
Girls Inc. of the Island City in the City of Alameda, CA  
South of Market Child Care, Inc.  
Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.  
The Village Family Service  
United Advocates for Children and Families  
University of California Davis Guardian Professions Program

*Colorado*

Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health  
Colorado Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Colorado Coalition of Adoptive Families  
Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition  
Colorado Youth Matter  
Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains  
Maple Star Colorado

*Connecticut*

All Our Kin, Inc.  
Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*District of Columbia*

Adoptions Together  
American Academy of Pediatrics, District of Columbia Chapter  
The Children's Guild

*Delaware*

American Academy of Pediatrics, Delaware Chapter  
Children & Families First

*Florida*

AAJ Research & Evaluation  
Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Inc.  
Florida's Children First  
Lutheran Services Florida

*Georgia*

American Academy of Pediatrics - Georgia Chapter  
Georgia Alliance to End Homelessness  
Hosea Helps  
North Georgia Community Action, Inc.  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
Together Georgia Provider Alliance, Inc.  
Voices for Georgia's Children  
Youth Villages - Georgia

*Hawaii*

American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter  
EPIC `Ohana

*Iowa*

Child and Family Policy Center  
Integrative Counseling Solutions  
Iowa Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
Parenting Way, Inc.

*Idaho*

Idaho Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*Illinois*

Camelot Care Centers, Inc.  
Children's Home + Aid  
Gift of Hope, Grandparents and Others Raising America's Children  
GROW in Illinois  
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Illinois Collaboration on Youth  
Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois  
Passages Alternative Living Programs, Inc.  
The Family Defense Center  
Universal Family Connection, Inc.  
Youth Outreach Services, Inc.

*Indiana*

Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Indiana Connected By 25  
Phoenix Institute  
Prevent Child Abuse Indiana  
Youth Villages - Indiana

*Kansas*

Kansas Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics  
Russell Child Development Center, Inc.

*Kentucky*

Children, Inc.  
Family & Children's Place  
Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
Kinship Families Coalition of Kentucky  
Open Arms Relative Caregivers Network

*Louisiana*

Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
LouisianaChildren.org

*Massachusetts*

Institute for Health and Recovery, Inc.  
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute  
Youth Villages - Massachusetts

*Maryland*

Adoptions Together  
Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baby's Bounty  
Children's Rights Fund  
Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Maryland Family Network  
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services  
The Children's Guild  
The Family Tree  
WIN Family Services

*Maine*

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. and the Kinship Program  
Community Care  
Families And Children Together  
Island Community Center  
Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*Michigan*

Families On The Move, Inc.  
Fostering Hopes & Futures  
Kids Belong  
Michigan Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Michigan's Children

*Minnesota*

American Academy of Pediatrics - Minnesota Chapter  
Children's Defense Fund - Minnesota  
Children's Home Society of Minnesota  
Main Street Family Services



*Missouri*

Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri  
Missouri Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
St. Louis Area Council on Child Abuse and Neglect

*Mississippi*

Children's Defense Fund – Southern Regional Office  
Disability Rights Mississippi  
Families as Allies  
Hope Family Resource  
Mississippi Center for Justice  
Mississippi Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Mississippi Families for Kids  
Mississippi Human Services Coalition  
Mississippi Low-Income Child Care Initiative  
Youth Villages - Mississippi

*Montana*

Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*North Carolina*

Catawba Valley Healthy Families  
Children's Home Society of North Carolina  
Children's Hope Alliance  
Exchange Family Center  
Family Preservation Community Services  
FIRST North Carolina  
National Association of Social Workers (North Carolina Chapter)  
North Carolina Pediatric Society  
Stephenson Consultation  
Youth Villages - North Carolina

*North Dakota*

North Dakota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*Nebraska*

Nebraska Appleseed  
Nebraska Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Nebraska Children's Home Society  
Voices for Children in Nebraska

*New Hampshire*

Child and Family Services of New Hampshire  
New Hampshire Children's Trust, Inc.  
New Hampshire Pediatric Society  
The Family Resource Center  
Youth Villages - New Hampshire

*New Jersey*

Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey  
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.  
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Parents Anonymous of New Jersey Inc.  
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey  
The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

*New Mexico*

La Familia, Inc.  
Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains  
New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks  
New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership  
New Mexico Pediatric Society  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
PB&J Family Services, Inc.

*Nevada*

American Academy of Pediatrics Nevada Chapter  
Baby's Bounty  
Children's Advocacy Alliance  
Lutheran Social Services of Nevada  
St. Jude's Ranch for Children

*New York*

American Academy of Pediatrics District II  
Children Awaiting Parents  
Children's Defense Fund - New York  
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc.  
Family Ties of Westchester  
Girls Inc. of Long Island  
Girls Inc. of New York City  
Girls Inc. of the Greater Capital Region  
Girls Inc. of Westchester  
Graham Windham  
Harlem Dowling-West Side Center for Children and Family Services

New York State American Academy of Pediatrics  
New York State American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 2  
New York State American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 3  
New York Zero-to-Three Network  
The Art of Practicing Institute  
The Children's Aid Society  
The Children's Village

*Ohio*

Children's Defense Fund - Ohio  
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Parents Anonymous® of Ohio  
United Way of Hardin County, Inc.  
Voices for Ohio's Children

*Oklahoma*

Oklahoma Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy  
Youth Villages - Oklahoma

*Oregon*

CASA of Jackson and Josephine Counties  
CASA of Linn County  
Citizen Review Board - Oregon's Foster Care Review Board  
OHSU  
Oregon Adoption Resource Exchange (OARE)  
Oregon Pediatric Society  
Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center (ORPARC)  
RISE Services, Inc.  
Youth Villages - Oregon

*Pennsylvania*

CASA Youth Advocates  
CLDA Diaper Bank  
Crawford County CASA  
Disability Rights Pennsylvania  
Family Services of Western Pennsylvania  
Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children  
The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (serves Eastern PA)

*Puerto Rico*

Puerto Rico Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*Rhode Island*

Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*South Carolina*

Children's Trust of South Carolina  
Family Preservation Community Services  
South Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

*South Dakota*

South Dakota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

*Tennessee*

Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Youth Villages - Tennessee

*Texas*

Buckner International  
Children's Defense Fund - Texas  
Community Partners of Montgomery County  
Family Focused Treatment Association Texas Chapter  
Fortified City Group  
Friends of Wednesday's Child  
Journey to Dream  
League of Women Voters of Dallas  
NTARUPT (North Texas Alliance to Reduce Pregnancy in Teens)  
Nurse Family Partnership (at Texas Children's Health Plan)  
One Voice Texas  
RESULTS Tarrant County  
Texas Pediatric Society  
TexProtects  
Voices for Children of San Antonio

*Utah*

Children's Service Society of Utah  
RISE Services, Inc.  
Utah Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Voices for Utah Children

*Virginia*

Adolescent and Family Growth Center, Inc.  
Adoptions Together  
Emmanuel Family Services, LLC  
Prevent Child Abuse Virginia  
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics  
Voices for Virginia's Children

*Vermont*

Vermont Kin As Parents

*Washington*

Children's Home Society of Washington  
HopeSparks  
Many Lights Foundation  
Partners for Our Children  
Treehouse

*Wisconsin*

American Academy of Pediatrics, Wisconsin Chapter  
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin  
Interfaith Older Adult Programs

*West Virginia*

KVC West Virginia  
The West Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Upshur County Family Resource Network

*Wyoming*

Wyoming Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Wyoming Kinship Advocacy