

July 23, 2024

The Honorable Jason Smith  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Richard Neal  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Darrin LaHood  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Work and Welfare  
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

The Honorable Danny Davis  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Work and Welfare  
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Neal, Chairman LaHood, and Ranking Member Davis:

The undersigned 22 organizations are signatories to [consensus recommendations](#) for reauthorizing Title IV-B of the Social Security Act. We are writing to express our support for your bipartisan *Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act*, which would invest critical new resources in Title IV-B and provide needed policy improvements.

Over the past year, your bipartisan leadership has brought critical attention to the need to reauthorize Title IV-B and better support strong families. The *Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act* responds to the three priority areas our consensus recommendations highlighted:

1. Family – deepening federal support for comprehensive approaches to prevent child welfare system involvement and keep children with their families and in family-based placements as much as possible;
2. Mental health – policy improvements that complement ongoing mental health efforts by federal policymakers and support a trauma-responsive child welfare system that promotes healing; and
3. Workforce – investing in a workforce that values and supports thriving families.

This bill would expand by \$10 million annually the Court Improvement Program, which is the only direct child welfare-related federal funding that state and tribal courts receive to manage nearly 600,000 children's cases in court each year. The bill would also expand by \$10 million annually the Regional Partnership Grants, which address the intersection of parental substance use and child welfare involvement. The bill also allocates more IV-B funding for tribes, reduces barriers to tribal participation in IV-B, and supports oversight of implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

Recognizing the vital role of strong families in supporting thriving children, the *Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act* would further bolster the role of Title IV-B in supporting kinship caregivers. It would also create a clear commitment in federal law that poverty is not neglect, by underscoring the role of family preservation services for families experiencing a crisis related to a lack of resources. The bill's new policy and investments in the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families program would also highlight the role of IV-B in primary prevention, by supporting community-based services and supports that prevent unnecessary child welfare involvement.

Responding to decades of level funding, our consensus recommendation called for new mandatory funding. The *Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act* would provide the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program \$85 million annually in needed new mandatory funding.

We support the *Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act* as an important step toward a child welfare system that better supports children and families. We look forward to collaborating with you to ensure the enactment of these critical policies and new investments.

Thank you for your continued bipartisan leadership in service of children and families. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to connect Zach Laris at [zach@bolderhorizon.org](mailto:zach@bolderhorizon.org).

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Psychological Association Services, Inc.  
American Public Human Services Association  
Bolder Horizon  
Children's Home Society of America  
Child Welfare League of America  
Children and Family Futures  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Trust Fund Alliance  
Family Focused Treatment Association  
FosterClub  
Generations United  
National Association of Counsel for Children  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of County Human Services Administrators  
National Child Abuse Coalition  
National Family Resource Coalition  
National Indian Child Welfare Association  
Prevent Child Abuse America  
Think of Us  
Voice for Adoption  
Zero to Three