

November 27, 2019 (Updated December 19, 2019)

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman
Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Danny K. Davis
Chairman
Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jackie Walorski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley, Ranking Member Wyden, Chairman Davis, and Ranking Member Walorski:

As organizations dedicated to the well-being of children, we would like to thank you for your steadfast leadership and to share our support for the *Family First Transition Act* (S. 2777/H.R. 4980).

The passage of the *Family First Prevention Services Act* (Family First) in 2018 provided an unprecedented opportunity to transform our nation's child welfare system. The law's historic reforms to the Title IV-E program will allow state, tribal and territorial child welfare agencies to proactively support families to keep more children safely at home with their families, and for children who do enter foster care, ensure that they be placed in family-based settings whenever possible. These reforms represent the first major modernization of the child welfare system in decades, and if implemented effectively, will be a significant step to fulfill the fundamental promise of child welfare, that every child deserves the opportunity to grow up in a safe, stable and loving family.

This moment presents an opportunity to ensure the reforms that Congress intended in Family First are realized. The *Family First Transition Act* presents a bold plan to help states, tribes and territories meet the unique fiscal and statutory requirements of implementation. Once enacted, it will provide critical tools to help states, tribes and territories take advantage of the opportunities contained in Family First, so that more children and families can thrive.

Specifically, the *Family First Transition Act* would:

- **Provide one-time flexible funding to states, tribes and territories to meet the financial requirements inherent in Family First implementation.** Each jurisdiction striving to realize the promise of Family First faces a unique set of challenges due to the

particulars of their system, from improving the quality of residential facilities to increasing the evidence base for their existing programs and expanding their array of prevention services. A one-time infusion of capital, like the one in the *Family First Transition Act*, will allow states, tribes and territories the opportunity to effectively and expediently meet their specific needs without making sacrifices in other important areas.

- **Offer a short-term funding guarantee for states and tribes facing cutbacks due to the expiration of Title IV-E waivers.** While the expiration of those waivers is not part of Family First, support for waiver jurisdictions' successful transition to Family First will promote continued quality service delivery and positive outcomes for vulnerable families. A short-term funding guarantee for these jurisdictions, as outlined in the Family First Transition Act, will allow them to move forward with Family First without losing the important progress they have made through the Title IV-E waivers.
- **Delay the 50 percent well-supported requirement in Family First to give states the opportunity to build a more robust array of prevention services and give the Children's Bureau a chance to build up the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.** The staggered delay of the 50 percent well-supported requirement put forward in the *Family First Transition Act* will allow states to build up their services array, while also giving the Clearinghouse time to expand its portfolio of approved programs and services. This will allow states the opportunity engage in important planning and resource alignment to work towards a vision of prevention that meets the unique needs of their families and communities.

At this critical juncture in Family First implementation, we appreciate your commitment to ensuring states, tribes and territories are able to fulfill the promise of Family First. We urge Congress to swiftly pass the *Family First Transition Act* so more children can have the opportunity to grow up in strong, stable and loving families.

Sincerely,

National Organizations:

A World Fit For Kids!
Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Muslim Health Professionals
American Psychological Association
Association of Children's Residential Centers
Attachment & Trauma Network, Inc.
Bethany Christian Services

Black and Pink Inc.
Boys Town
Campaign for Youth Justice
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Center Point, Inc.
Chaddock Attachment and Trauma Services
Child First, Inc.
Child Welfare League of America
Children and Family Futures
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Trust Fund Alliance
Children's Home Society of America
Choices Coordinated Care Solutions
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Coalition on Human Needs
Comfort Consults, LLC
Council on Accreditation
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
Eckerd Connects
Families USA
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Equality
First Focus Campaign for Children
Foster America
FosterClub
Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls Leadership
Futures Without Violence
Generations United
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Grutza Consulting, LLC
Health Connect America
Healthy Teen Network
Justice For Families
Justice Policy Institute
Juvenile Law Center
Kempe Foundation
Lutheran Services in America
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
Methodist Home For Children
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health

National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA)
National Center for Housing & Child Welfare
National Center on Adoption and Permanency
National Children's Alliance
National Crittenton
National Family Preservation Network
National Family Support Network
National Indian Child Welfare Association
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Network for Youth
National Respite Coalition
National Youth Advocate Program, Inc.
Nexus Youth and Family Solutions
Norris, Inc.
North American Council on Adoptable Children
Nurse-Family Partnership
Omni Visions, Inc.
Parents Anonymous Inc.
Parents as Teachers
Parents as Teachers National Center
Pressley Ridge
Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator
ResCare Youth Services
RESULTS
Rights4Girls
RISE Services, Inc
Saint Francis Ministries
School Social Work Association of America
Service Alternatives
Sisters of Charity Federation
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity, BVM
SparkAction
Stepping Stone Treatment Center
Teaching Family Association
The Bair Foundation
The Bright Wings Foundation
The Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute
The Children's Village
The Dibble Institute
The Family Focused Treatment Association

The Global Justice Institute
The John Leary Organization
The Ray E. Helfer Society
Treatment Communities of America
Voice for Adoption
Youth First Initiative
Youth Villages

State Organizations:

Alabama

Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Lee County Youth Development Center
SAFY of Alabama
Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative for Economic & Social Justice

Alaska

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

Arizona

Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Arizona Council of Human Service Providers
Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors
Arizona Partnership for Children
Child and Family Resources, Inc.
Children's Action Alliance
Grandfamilies of Surprise
Prevent Child Abuse Arizona

Arkansas

Arkansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Methodist Family Health Inc.

California

American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 1
American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 3
American Academy of Pediatrics, Orange County Chapter
Association of Community Human Service Agencies
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
Child Care Resource & Referral
Children's Defense Fund – California
Children Now
Children's Bureau of Southern California
Children's Institute

Family Care Network, Inc.
Foster Care Counts
Foster Nation
Hathaway Sycamores
Implematix, Inc.
John Burton Advocates for Youth
Lincoln
Placer Independent Resource Services
Public Counsel
Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
The Village Family Services
Uplift Family Services
Walden Family Services

Colorado

American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter
CASA of Jefferson & Gilpin Counties
CO Association of Family & Children's Agencies
Colorado CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
Colorado Office of the Child's Representative
LifeStories Child & Family Advocacy
SAFY of Colorado
Tennyson Center for Children

Connecticut

All Our Kin, Inc.
Children's Community Programs of Connecticut
Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Delaware

Children & Families First
Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families

District of Columbia

Boys Town Washington D.C.
D.C. Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Florida

Big Bend Community Based Care
Boys Town Central Florida
Boys Town North Florida
Boys Town South Florida
Brevard Family Partnership
ChildNet, Inc.
Children's Home Society of Florida
Children's Network of SWFL
Directions for Living

Family Support Services of North Florida
Florida Coalition for Children
Florida Network of Youth and Family Services
Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
Florida United Methodist Children's Home, Inc.
Florida's Children First
Heartland for Children
Kids in Distress
Legal Aid Service of Broward County
Lutheran Services Florida
Mental Health America of Southeast Florida
One Church One Child of Florida, Inc.
Wesley House Family Services
Youth and Family Alternatives Inc.

Georgia

FaithBridge Foster Care
Family Ties Enterprises Inc
Georgia Association of Counsel for Children
Northstar Psychological
ProFamily
Twin Cedars Youth and Family Services, Inc.
Wellroot Family Services

Hawaii

American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii Chapter
EPIC Ohana

Idaho

Idaho Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Northwest Children's Home

Illinois

Allendale Association
Alternative Schools Network
Arden Shore Child and Family Services
Bethany for Children & Families
Caritas Family Solutions
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago
Children's Home & Aid
Children's Place Association
Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Illinois Collaboration on Youth
Illinois-Iowa Center for Independent Living
Indian Oaks Academy, Nexus
Introspect Youth Services, Inc.

Kemmerer Village
Lawrence Hall
Lutheran Child & Family Services of IL
Spero Family Services
The Baby Fold
The Center for Youth and Family Solutions
Thresholds
Youth Outreach Services Inc.

Indiana

Allen Co. Youth Services Center
Bridges Counseling and Family Services Center, LLC
Families First Indiana, Inc.
Family and Community Partners, LLC
Family Ark, Inc.
Family Community Connections, INC
Family Focus Inc.
Family Solutions
Family Time, Inc.
Family Works, Inc.
Friends of Open Door Youth Services
George Junior Republic in Indiana
Gibault Children's services
Group Homes for Children
Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy
Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Indiana United Methodist Children's Home Inc.
Interact Family Services
Ireland Home Based Services
Journey Support Services Inc.
Life Choices Maternity & Youth Home
LifeSolutions Counseling, PC
Lutheran Social Services Inc.
Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc.
New Hope of Indiana, Inc.
Paddock View Residential Center, Inc.
Phoenix Institute
RainTree Consulting
SAFY of Indiana
SCAN (Stop Child Abuse and Neglect), Inc.
T. C. Harris School & Academy
The Villages of Indiana, Inc.
The Youth Service Bureau of Jay County, Inc.
United Methodist Youth Home
Vigo County Homes for Children
Whittington Homes and Services for Children and Families

Youth Encouragement Services, Inc.
Youth Outlook, Inc.
Youth Service Bureau St. Joseph County
Youth Services Bureau of Huntington County

Iowa

Boys Town Iowa
Coalition for Family & Children's Services in Iowa
First Resources Corporation
Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Lutheran Services in Iowa
Orchard Place
Youth Emergency Services & Shelter of Iowa (YESS)
YSS

Kansas

Cornerstones of Care
Dominican Sisters Ministry of Presence
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
The Children's Shelter
University of Kansas School of Social Welfare

Kentucky

Brighton Center, Inc.
Children's Alliance of Kentucky
Gateway Children's Services
Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Maryhurst
Purchase Youth Village
Ramey-Estep Homes, Inc
SAFY of Kentucky, Inc.

Louisiana

Boys Town Louisiana
Kingsley House
Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge

Maine

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.
Community Concepts, Inc
Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Maryland

Adoptions Together
Center for Children, Healthy Families Southern Maryland

Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
WIN Family Services

Massachusetts

Boys Town New England
Children's League of Massachusetts
Hillcrest Educational Centers, Inc.
Justice Resource Institute
Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange
Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston

Michigan

Comstock Community Center
Methodist Children's Home Society
Michigan Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
Northern Family Intervention Services
Seeds for Success
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan

Minnesota

AspireMN
Children's Defense Fund – Minnesota
Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health and Well-Being
Main Street Family Services
Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
State of Minnesota Office of Ombudsperson for Families
Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc.

Mississippi

Children's Defense Fund – Southern Regional Office
Families as Allies
Hope Village for Children
Mississippi Center for Justice
Mississippi Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Missouri

Great Circle
Cornerstones of Care

Montana

Behavioral Health Alliance of Montana
Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Nebraska

Heartland Family Service
Nebraska Appleseed
Sisters of Mercy West Midwest
Voices for Children in Nebraska

Nevada

Boys Town Nevada
Foster Kinship
Ron Wood Family Resource Center
SAFY of Nevada

New Hampshire

Ascentria Care Alliance
New Hampshire Pediatric Society
NFI North, Inc.
Spaulding Youth Center

New Jersey

Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey
Garfield Park Academy
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.
New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
New Jersey Parents' Caucus
Parents Anonymous of New Jersey

New York

Catholic Guardian Services
Children's Defense Fund – New York
Children's Home of Jefferson County
Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies
Disabled in Action of Greater Syracuse Inc.
Family Focus Adoption Services
Graham Windham
Hope For Youth
JCCA
MercyFirst
New York Zero-to-Three Network
Northern Rivers Family of Services
New York State American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 1
New York State American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 2
New York State American Academy of Pediatrics Chapter 3
SCO Family of Services
Sheltering Arms
South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)
St. Catherine's Center for Children

The Children's Village
The Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services
UJA-Federation of NY

North Carolina

Ada Jenkins Center
Benchmarks
Child Care Services Association
Children's Hope Alliance
FIRST North Carolina
Nazareth Child & Family Connection
North Carolina Pediatric Society
Omni Visions, Inc

North Dakota

Imagine Thriving
Lutheran Social Services Housing
Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota

Ohio

Children's Defense Fund – Ohio
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Ohio Children's Alliance
Ohio Psychological Association
Policy Matters Ohio
Public Children Services Association of Ohio
SAFY of Ohio
Schubert Center for Child Studies, Case Western Reserve University
St. Aloysius
St. Vincent Family Center
The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers

Oklahoma

American Academy of Pediatrics - Oklahoma Chapter
Oklahoma Policy Institute
Policy & Performance Consultants, Inc.

Oregon

CASA of Coos County
Cascadia behavioral Health Care
Kairos
Morrison Child and Family Services
Northwest Family Services
Oregon Association of Relief Nurseries
Oregon Pediatric Society
Parrott Creek Child & Family Services

Prevent Child Abuse Oregon
Safety Net Coalition of Clackamas County

Pennsylvania

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Montgomery County Community Action Development Commission
Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth & Family Services
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Rhode Island

Boys Town New England
Ocean Tides
Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families
The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

South Carolina

Hilton Head for Peace
Hope Center for Children
SAFY of South Carolina
SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center
South Carolina Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Thornwell

South Dakota

Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota
South Dakota Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Tennessee

Camelot Care Centers
MillarRich, L.L.C.
Smoky Mountain Children's Home
Steppenstone Youth Treatment Center
Tennessee Alliance for Children and Families
Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Texas

Buckner International
Center for Public Policy Priorities
Children's Defense Fund – Texas
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Family Compass
McCulloch County Child Welfare Board
Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services

Texas Council of Child Welfare Boards
Texas Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
Texas Pediatric Society, the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
The SAFE Alliance
Upbring
Watermark Community Church

Utah

American Academy of Pediatrics, Utah Chapter
Children's Service Society
Utah Youth Village
Voices for Utah Children

Vermont

American Academy of Pediatrics, Vermont Chapter

Virginia

Early Impact Virginia
Families Forward Virginia
Healthy Families Virginia
Institute of Forgiveness
Nolef Turns Inc.
The New 21st Century Mo
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
Virginia Home for Boys and Girls
Virginia Parents as Teachers
Voices for Virginia's Children

Washington

Childhaven
Children's Home Society of Washington
Community Youth Services
Family Counseling Northwest
Family Education and Support Services
Foster Parent Association of Washington State
HopeSparks Family Services
Parent Trust for Washington Children
Partners for Our Children
Ryther
Secret Harbor
The Mockingbird Society
Treehouse
YMCA of Greater Seattle

West Virginia

Academy Programs

Children's Home Society of West Virginia
West Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
West Virginia Child Care Association

Wisconsin

Advocates for Healthy Transitional Living LLC
Children's Wisconsin
Lad Lake, Inc.
Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's Agencies
Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Wyoming

Wyoming Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics