

May 21, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus
U.S. Senate
511 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
U.S. Senate
135 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Enzi
U.S. Senate
379A Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable George Miller
U.S. House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Howard McKeon
U.S. House of Representatives
2184 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
U.S. House of Representatives
2204 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Barton
U.S. House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp
U.S. House of Representatives
341 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Baucus, Grassley, Kennedy and Enzi and Representatives Miller, McKeon, Waxman, Barton, Rangel and Camp:

As national organizations committed to improving the lives of children, the undersigned organizations urge you to support President Obama's exciting new initiative to create the first dedicated federal funding stream solely for the establishment and expansion of evidence-based, voluntary home visitation programs for low income parents with young children. As proposed, the program will invest \$8.6 billion in mandatory funding over 10 years, starting with \$124 million to serve an estimated 50,000 families in FY10, and ultimately reaching an estimated 450,000 families at a cost of \$1.8 billion in FY19.

Administered through the federal Administration for Children and Families in HHS, the program will provide formula-based grants to states for evidence-based, voluntary home visiting. Under the proposal, grantees must submit a plan describing the program models they will follow, the evidence base supporting their effectiveness, and how they will assess implementation and ensure fidelity to the proven models. The proposal also includes a set-aside of not less than five percent for training and technical assistance, research and evaluation, monitoring and administrative support. This home visiting initiative is a sound investment in low income families and children across the country.

Continuing research has documented the positive impact that quality home visitation programs provide for children and families, including: greater school readiness, enhanced child health and development, improved parenting practices, and reduction in child maltreatment and later criminality.

Voluntary home visitation is an effective, research-based and cost-efficient way to ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow up healthy, safe, ready to learn and able to become productive members of society. Investing in this research-proven approach now will mean savings down the road in costs associated with health, education, child maltreatment and criminal justice. We urge you to actively support this initiative moving forward in Congress this summer and ensure its enactment so home visiting can help to improve the lives of children and families.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Children and Families
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Humane Association
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Psychological Association
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Black Administrators in Child Welfare
The Broader, Bolder Approach to Education
Catholic Charities USA
Children's Defense Fund
CLASP
CWLA
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Action Partnership
DADS Unlimited
Early Care and Education Consortium
Every Child Matters Education Fund
Family Violence Prevention Fund
Family Voices
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
First Five Years Fund
First Focus
Foster Care Alumni of America
Foster Club
Foster Family-Based Treatment Association
Generations United
Grandfamilies of America
Healthy Teen Network
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI USA)
Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
Invest in Kids
Kidsave

Lutheran Services America
National African American Drug Policy Council Coalition
National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of County Human Services Administrators
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Association to Prevent Sexual Abuse of Children
National Association of School Psychologists
National CASA Association
National Center on Family Homelessness
National Child Abuse Coalition
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza
National Collaboration for Youth
National Crittenton Foundation
National Exchange Club Foundation
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Foster Care Coalition
National Parent Teacher Association
National Parenting Education Network
National Youth Advocate Program
National Women's Law Center
National WIC Association
Nurse Family Partnership
Ounce of Prevention Fund
Orphan Foundation of America
Parents as Teachers National Center
Pew Center on the States
Prevent Child Abuse America/Healthy Families America
The Parent-Child Home Program
RESULTS
Society for Research in Child Development
Stop It Now!
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Neighborhood Centers of America
United Way of America
Voices for America's Children
ZERO TO THREE