

[Date]

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Senate Finance Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Senate Finance Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Rangel  
Chairman  
House Ways and Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim McCrery  
Ranking Member  
House Ways and Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Chairman  
House Education and Labor Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Howard McKeon  
Ranking Member  
House Education and Labor Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim McDermott  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Income Security and  
Family Support  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Weller  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Income Security and  
Family Support  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sens. Baucus and Grassley and Reps. Rangel, McCrery, Miller, McKeon, McDermott and Weller:

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for the Kinship Caregiver Support Act, bipartisan legislation introduced this year in both the House (H.R. 2188) and the Senate (S. 661), which would provide assistance to grandparents and other relatives who have stepped in to care for children when their parents cannot, including relatives who become the legal guardians of children so they can exit foster care. We urge you to enact this legislation this year.

Approximately 2.5 million children are being cared for by grandparents and other relatives without either parent present. One in five of these children live below the poverty line and many of the caregivers live on fixed incomes, but only about 30% receive any public financial support.

Of the estimated half-million children currently in foster care in the United States, thousands could exit the system with custody transferred to relatives who are willing to become their legal guardians. Unfortunately, under current federal law the caregivers of these children are likely to lose the financial assistance they received as foster parents to meet the needs of the child if they become legal guardians and provide permanent homes for the children.

The Kinship Caregiver Support Act addresses several existing barriers for grandparents and other relatives raising children. It helps different groups of children in different ways by:

- Requiring notice to be given to relatives of children who enter foster care and authorizing states to establish separate licensing standards and regulations for relative foster parents, while still maintaining safety standards for children;

- Establishing a Kinship Navigator Program to help relative caregivers navigate their way through available programs and services; and
- Continuing federal financial assistance for foster children when relatives who have been caring for them in foster care choose to become their legal guardians.

Children in the nation's foster care system, as well as those whose grandparents or other relatives stepped in to prevent foster care placement, need the support and stability that can be found in the home of a loving relative. Such stability and security is a necessary prerequisite for emotional and educational development.

The undersigned organizations believe that the Kinship Caregiver Support Act is an important step toward these worthwhile goals. We look forward to working with you on this important legislation.

Respectfully yours,

#### **National Organizations**

AARP  
 Alliance for Children and Families  
 American Association of Children's Residential Centers  
 American Humane Association  
 Association on American Indian Affairs  
 Center for Law and Social Policy  
 Child Welfare League of America  
 Children's Defense Fund  
 Children's Rights  
 Easter Seals  
 First Focus  
 Foster Care Alumni of America  
 Fostering Results  
 Generations United  
 GrandFamilies of America  
 Kids Are Waiting: Fix Foster Care Now  
 National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children  
 National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
 National Association of Counties  
 National Association of County Human Services Administrators  
 National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs  
 The National CASA Association  
 National Center on Caregiving at FCA  
 National Committee of Grandparents for Children's Rights  
 National Congress of American Indians  
 National Foster Care Coalition  
 National Foster Parent Association  
 National Indian Child Welfare Association  
 National Network for Youth  
 National Respite Coalition  
 North American Council on Adoptable Children  
 Prevent Child Abuse America  
 United Neighborhood Centers of America  
 Voice for Adoption  
 Voices for America's Children

#### **Alabama**

Children's Aid Society (Birmingham, AL)  
 Gateway (Birmingham, AL)

#### **Alaska**

Volunteers of America Alaska – Grandfamilies Network Project (Anchorage, AK)

#### **Arizona**

Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, Inc. (Tucson, AZ)  
 Children's Action Alliance (Phoenix, AZ)  
 Child and Family Resources, Inc. (Tucson, AZ)  
 Child Crisis Center (Mesa, AZ)  
 Christian Family Care Agency, Inc. (Phoenix, AZ)  
 Fresh Start Community Services (Glendale, AZ)  
 Grandparents United for Children's Rights (Phoenix, AZ)  
 Human Resource Training, Inc. (Phoenix, AZ)  
 Seeds of Hope (Casa Grande, AZ)  
 Southwest Human Development, Inc. (Phoenix, AZ)

#### **Arkansas**

Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind (Kavanaugh, AR)  
 Family Service Agency (North Little Rock, AR)

#### **California**

ACTS for Children (Bloomington, CA)  
 Advanced Education Services (Colton, CA)  
 The Alliance for Children's Rights (Los Angeles, CA)  
 The California Alliance for Child and Family Services (Sacramento, CA)  
 City & County of San Francisco (San Francisco, CA)

County Welfare Directors Association of  
California (Sacramento, CA)  
Edgewood Center for Children and Families (San  
Carlos, CA)  
Five Acres (Altadena, CA)  
Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services  
(Pasadena, CA)  
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles (Los  
Angeles, CA)  
Kinship Center (Salinas, CA)  
Monterey County Department of Social and  
Employment Services (Salinas, CA)  
Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services (Los  
Angeles, CA)  
Seneca Center for Children and Families (San  
Leandro, CA)  
Triad Family Services (Sacramento, CA)  
Trinity Youth Services (Colton, CA)

### **Colorado**

Catholic Charities (Denver, CO)  
Colorado Association of Family and Children's  
Agencies (Denver, CO)  
Colorado Coalition of Adoptive Families  
(Louisville, CO)

### **Connecticut**

Connecticut Foster Parent Association (Hartford,  
CT)

### **Delaware**

GrandParents United DE, Inc. (Hockessin, DE)

### **District of Columbia**

Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc. (Washington, D.C.)

### **Florida**

Family Service Centers, Inc. (Clearwater, FL)  
Family Services of Metro Orlando (Orlando, FL)  
The Florida Center for Child and Family  
Development (Sarasota, FL)  
Florida Kinship Center (Tampa, FL)

### **Georgia**

Families First (Atlanta, GA)  
Fulton County Human Services Dept. of Children  
and Youth (Fulton County, GA)  
Georgia Association of Homes and Services for  
Children (Atlanta, GA)

### **Hawaii**

Catholic Charities Hawaii (Honolulu, HI)  
Foster Family Programs of Hawaii (Honolulu, HI)  
Partners in Development Foundation (Honolulu,  
HI)

### **Idaho**

Eastern Idaho Grandparents Raising  
Grandchildren (Idaho Falls, ID)  
Idaho Children's Trust Fund/Prevent Child Abuse  
Idaho (Boise, ID)  
Idaho KINCARE Coalition (Boise, ID)  
Treasure Valley Grandparents as Parents (Boise,  
ID)

### **Illinois**

The Baby Fold (Normal, IL)  
Bethany for Children & Families (Moline, IL)  
The Chicago Children's Advocacy Center  
(Chicago, IL)  
Child Care Association of Illinois (Springfield, IL)  
Children's Home + Aid (Chicago, IL)  
Methodist Youth Services, Inc. (Chicago, IL)  
Metropolitan Family Services (Chicago, IL)  
Northwestern University Settlement Association  
(Chicago, IL)

### **Indiana**

Children's Bureau, Inc. (Indianapolis, IN)  
Family and Children's Center (Mishawaka, IN)  
IARCCA - An Association of Children & Family  
Services (Indianapolis, IN)  
White's Residential and Family Services  
(Wabash, IN)

### **Iowa**

Coalition for Family and Children's Services in  
Iowa (Des Moines, IA)  
Four Oaks (Cedar Rapids, IA)  
Horizons, A Family Service Alliance (Cedar  
Rapids, IA)  
Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association  
(Cedar Rapids, IA)  
Iowa KidsNet (Des Moines, IA)  
Iowa Respite and Crisis Care Coalition  
(Urbandale, IA)  
Lutheran Services in Iowa (Des Moines, IA)

### **Kansas**

Rainbows United, Inc. (Wichita, KS)

### **Kentucky**

Children's Alliance (Frankfort, KY)  
Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)  
(Louisville, KY)  
G.L.U.E. (Giving Love Understanding and  
Encouragement) (Louisville, KY)  
Jewish Family and Vocational Service (Louisville,  
KY)  
Open Arms Support Group (Elizabethtown, KY)

**Louisiana**

Family Service of Greater Baton Rouge (Baton Rouge, LA)

**Maine**

Angel on My Shoulder (North Berwick, ME)

**Maryland**

The Children's Guild, Inc. (Baltimore, MD)  
MAC Incorporated Area Agency on Aging (Salisbury, MD)  
Montgomery County Health and Human Services (Rockville, MD)  
Seton Center (Princess Anne, MD)  
Solutions For Children And Caregivers of Maryland (Crofton, MD)

**Massachusetts**

Children's League of Massachusetts (Boston, MA)

**Michigan**

Catholic Social Services of Oakland County (Pontiac, MI)  
Child & Family Services of Northwestern Michigan (Traverse City, MI)  
Family and Children's Services (Midland, MI)  
Starr Commonwealth (Albion, MI)

**Minnesota**

The City, Inc. (Minneapolis, MN)  
Family & Children's Service (Minneapolis, MN)  
Minnesota Council of Child Caring Agencies (St. Paul, MN)  
Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association (St. Paul, MN)  
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center (Minneapolis, MN)  
St. David's Child Development & Family Services (Minnetonka, MN)

**Mississippi**

Faith in Action Helping Hands (Petal, MS)  
Pinebelt Association for Families (Petal, MS)

**Missouri**

Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Inc. (Kansas City, MO)  
Child Abuse Prevention Association (Independence, MO)  
Child Advocacy Services Center, Inc./d.b.a. The Children's Place (Kansas City, MO)  
Cornerstones of Care (Kansas City, MO)  
Crittenton Children's Center (Kansas City, MO)

Epworth Children & Family Services (Webster Groves, MO)  
Family Advocates, LLC (Kansas City, MO)  
Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri (St. Louis, MO)  
Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association (Independence, MO)  
Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies (Jefferson City, MO)  
Partnership for Children (Kansas City, MO)  
Youth In Need (St. Charles, MO)

**Montana**

Indian Child Welfare and Family Resource Center (Helena, MT)  
Summit Preparatory School (Kalispell, MT)

**Nebraska**

Heartland Family Service (Omaha, NE)

**Nevada**

Child Focus (Las Vegas, NV)  
Mountain Circle Family Services, Inc. (Reno, NV)  
Reaching Our Community's Kids (R.O.C.K.) (Las Vegas, NV)  
Sierra Association of Foster Families (Reno, NV)

**New Hampshire**

Children's Alliance of New Hampshire (Concord, NH)

**New Jersey**

The Bridge, Inc. (Caldwell, NJ)  
Caregivers of New Jersey (Bordentown, NJ)  
Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. (Paramus, NJ)  
Family Service Association of New Jersey (Ewing, NJ)  
Morristown Neighborhood House Association (Morristown, NJ)  
Robins' Nest, Inc. (Glassboro, NJ)

**New Mexico**

Fourth Judicial CASA (Las Vegas, NM)  
Outcomes, Inc. (Albuquerque, NM)

**New York**

Andrus Children's Center (Yonkers, NY)  
Child and Family Services (Buffalo, NY)  
City of New York Administration for Children's Services (New York, NY)  
City of New York Department for the Aging (DFTA) (New York, NY)  
Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) (Albany, NY)

Family Services of Westchester (Port Chester, NY)  
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (New York, NY)  
Hillside Family of Agencies (Rochester, NY)  
Hispanic Senior Action Council (New York, NY)  
Institute for Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, Inc. (New York, NY)  
Liberty Resources, Inc. (Syracuse, NY)  
New York State Association of Family Service Agencies (Albany, NY)  
New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children (Ithaca, NY)  
New York State Office of Children and Family Services (Rensselaer, NY)  
Parsons Child and Family Center (Albany, NY)  
Presbyterian Senior Services (New York, NY)  
St. Matthew's & St. Timothy's Neighborhood Center, Inc. (New York, NY)

#### **North Carolina**

Children and Family Services Association (Raleigh, NC)  
Family Service of the Piedmont (Jamestown, NC)

#### **North Dakota**

Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation Social Services (New Town, ND)

#### **Ohio**

Alliance of Child Caring Service Providers (Cleveland, OH)  
Ashtabula County Children Services Board (Ashtabula, OH)  
Belmont County Department of Job and Family Services (St. Clairsville, OH)  
The Center for Community Solutions (Columbus, OH)  
Champaign County Department of Job and Family Services (Urbana, OH)  
Child Care Resource Center (Lorain, OH)  
Clinton County Job and Family Services (Wilmington, OH)  
Contact Center, Inc. (Cincinnati, OH)  
Coshocton County Job and Family Services (Coshocton, OH)  
County Commissioners Association of Ohio (Columbus, OH)  
Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services (Cleveland, OH)  
Defiance County Job and Family Services (Defiance, OH)  
Delaware County Job and Family Services (Delaware, OH)  
Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services (Cincinnati, OH)  
Lucas County Children Services Board (Toledo, OH)  
Medina County Job and Family Services (Medina, OH)

Muskingum County Children Services (Zanesville, OH)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio (NAMI Ohio) (Columbus, OH)  
National Council of Jewish Women-Ohio (Orange Village, OH)  
Ohio Empowerment Coalition (Cincinnati, OH)  
Ohio Grandparent/Kinship Coalition (Akron, OH)  
Perry County Children's Services Board (New Lexington, OH)  
Personal & Family Counseling Services (New Philadelphia, OH)  
Preble Job & Family Services, Children Services Division (Eaton, OH)  
Public Children Services Association of Ohio (Columbus, OH)  
Richland County Children Services (Mansfield, OH)  
Statewide Kinship Caregiver Advisory Board (Columbus, OH)  
Summit County Children Services (Akron, OH)  
Trumbull County Children Services (Warren, OH)  
Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services (New Philadelphia, OH)  
Voices for Ohio's Children (Cleveland, OH)  
Washington County Children Services Board (Marietta, OH)  
Williams County Job & Family Services (Bryan, OH)

#### **Oregon**

St. Mary's Home for Boys (Beaverton, OR)  
Southern Oregon Adolescent Study and Treatment Center (Grants Pass, OR)

#### **Pennsylvania**

Children's Home of Reading (Reading, PA)  
Family and Community Service of Delaware County (Media, PA)  
Family Service Association of Bucks County (Langhorne, PA)  
Methodist Services for Children and Families (Philadelphia, PA)  
The NorthShore Community Alliance (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Pennsylvania State Foster Parent Association (Harrisburg, PA)  
Philadelphia Society for Services to Children (Philadelphia, PA)  
Three Rivers Adoption Council (TRAC) (Pittsburgh, PA)

#### **Rhode Island**

RI Council of Resource Providers for Children, Youth and Families (East Providence, RI)

#### **South Carolina**

Miracle Hill Ministries (Greenville, SC)

**South Dakota**

Grandparents as Parents Support Group (Sioux Falls, SD)

**Tennessee**

Goodwill Homes Community Services, Inc. (Memphis, TN)  
Vanderbilt Child and Family Policy Center (Nashville, TN)

**Texas**

Arrow Child and Family Ministries (Spring, TX)  
Center for Public Policy Priorities (Austin, TX)  
Children At Risk (Houston, TX)  
DePelchin Children's Center (Houston, TX)

**Utah**

Children's Service Society, Grandfamilies Program (Salt Lake City, UT)

**Vermont**

Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont (St. Johnsbury, VT)  
Vermont Kin as Parents (Winooski, VT)

**Virginia**

FACES of Virginia Families (Ashland, VA)  
Legal Services of Northern Virginia (Falls Church, VA)

**Washington**

Cascade People's Center Kinship Support Group (Seattle, WA)  
Catholic Family & Child Services (Yakima, WA)  
Child and Family Guidance Center (Takoma, WA)

Childhaven (Seattle, WA)  
Children's Home Society (Vancouver, WA)  
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (Chelan/Douglas Co.) (East Wanatchee, WA)  
Grandparents Reparenting (Seattle, WA)  
National CASA Association (Seattle, WA)  
Northwest Regional Council, Family Caregiver Support Program, AAA (Bellingham, WA)  
Southeast Youth and Family Services (Seattle, WA)  
Tamarack Center (Spokane, WA)

**West Virginia**

Embracing Family Caregivers (Fairmont, WV)

**Wisconsin**

St. Rose Youth & Family Center Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)  
Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's Agencies (Madison, WI)  
Word of Hope Ministries, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)

**Wyoming**

Wyoming Kinship Advocacy – A Program of Community Action of Laramie County (Cheyenne, WY)

**For more information and/or to sign on to this letter, contact Varina Winder at (202) 429-0400 x16 or [kinship@acf-unca.org](mailto:kinship@acf-unca.org).**