

May 3, 2019

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
U.S. Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
U.S. Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kim Schrier
U.S. House of Representatives
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Stivers
U.S. House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Baldwin, Senator Cassidy, Representative Schrier, and Representative Stivers:

The below signed organizations write to express our strong support for the *Early Detection to Stop Infant Abuse and Prevent Fatalities Act (S.1009/H.R. 2076)*, and to thank you for your bipartisan leadership on preventing child abuse injuries and fatalities.

According to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, an estimated 1,720 children died from abuse or neglect in the United States in fiscal year 2017. Half of those deaths involved infants under the age of 1, and nearly three-quarters involved children younger than three. Multiple studies have found that seemingly minor injuries in young infants are often actually indicators of abuse. Such injuries are often overlooked by medical providers, caregivers, and child welfare professionals because they seem trivial and are not recognized as signs of abuse. Without early intervention, physical abuse can escalate, resulting in severe injuries or even fatalities.

Your legislation will support our efforts to prevent child abuse injuries and fatalities by creating a demonstration program within the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to test effective practices for improving early detection and management of injuries indicative of potential abuse in infants. This will help provide us with the tools that are urgently needed to recognize the earliest signs of abuse in those children at the highest risk for physical harm and intervene to protect them.

The reauthorization of CAPTA provides an opportunity to invest in a system to provide access to core services to strengthen families, improve child well-being and prevent harm and maltreatment through a public health approach to child abuse prevention and treatment. This legislation will support that approach by helping improve early identification efforts to ensure infants receive the needed attention to keep them safe and place them on a trajectory to thrive.

Thank you again for your leadership in working to protect children from abuse.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Psychological Association
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Child and Family Policy Center

Children Now
Children's Home Society of America
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Children's Advocacy Institute
MomsRising
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Child Abuse Statistics & Policy
Ohio Children's Hospital Association
Saint Francis Ministries
Seattle Children's
VOICES for Alabama's Children