



March 14, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
House Ways & Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander M. Levin
Ranking Minority
House Ways & Means Committee
1106 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Levin:

The National Association of County Human Services Administrators (NACHSA) strongly opposes the bill to eliminate the Social Services Block Grant (HR 4724). Counties in ten states receive this funding directly from the state and depend upon it to serve vulnerable children and adults within their communities.

Despite the differences in the use of funds overall, Adult Protective Services (APS) has consistently emerged as the most common use of SSBG funds by county-administered states. Minnesota, North Carolina and Ohio are among the states where counties use SSBG the most for APS. Child Welfare Services was the second most common use of funds, followed by Services to Individuals with Disabilities.

NACHSA joined the National Association of Counties (NACo) in conducting a SSBG survey of counties in 2012. In that report, counties who depend upon the funding for APS reported that there is no other state or county program that could cover the loss of SSBG funds. In fact, SSBG is currently the only federally-funded program that can be used for APS. Congress created the Elder Justice Act as part of health care reform, but that program has received only \$8 million last year.

Most counties have reported that a loss of SSBG funds would lead to elimination or reduction of services, followed by lay-offs and institutionalization of individuals who are currently receiving in-home services. The program does not serve as a 'no-strings-attached slush fund' as depicted in the Committee's press release regarding the bill. It is a critical federal component to support county efforts to protect our most vulnerable families.

Thank you for considering our views. Please contact Tom Joseph, Legislative Representative for NACHSA at 202.898.1446 or tj@wafed.com should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Bengtsson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Rick Bengtsson
NACHSA President
Executive Director, Department of Human Services
El Paso County, Colorado