



**June 14, 2016**

The Honorable Kevin Brady, Chair  
United States House of Representatives  
Ways and Means Committee

The Honorable Sander Levin, Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives  
Ways and Means Committee

The Honorable Vern Buchanan, Chair  
United States House of Representatives  
Human Resources Subcommittee

The Honorable Lloyd Doggett, Ranking Member  
United States House of Representatives  
Human Resources Subcommittee

The Honorable Orrin Hatch, Chair  
United States Senate  
Senate Finance Committee

The Honorable Ron Wyden, Ranking Member  
United States Senate  
Senate Finance Committee

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Levin, Chairman Buchanan and Ranking Member Doggett, and Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden,

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and its affiliate, the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA), on behalf of most of our state and local public child welfare administrators offer our support for the *Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016* (HR 5456) and thank you for your leadership in introducing the bill. The legislation promotes a number of policy priorities our state and local members have identified as key to improving child and family well-being. These policies are part of APHSA's *Pathways* Initiative, a broader framework for building a stronger, more sustainable human-services system. Under *Pathways*, we are working with our members to promote more integrated policies (illustrated in the bill's alignment of federal funds across the Title IV-E and IV-B programs); invest in outcomes (through the new Title IV-E foster care prevention program that provides funding for agencies to intervene earlier with families and decrease the need for placement in out-of-home settings); partnering for collective impact (addressed in the reauthorized Regional Partnership Grants) and others.

Additionally, we appreciate the efforts you have made to address past concerns raised by our state and local public child welfare leaders. These include:

- Permitting the use of federal funds to pay for programs across the evidence-based spectrum, to support promising practices and build knowledge about what works;

- Making Title IV-B funds available to states so that they may modernize their Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) services so children may be more quickly and effectively placed in appropriate homes across state lines;
- Expanding parental substance abuse treatment through foster care maintenance payments for children with parents in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility;
- Supporting the National Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities recommendation for states to develop a statewide plan to prevent fatalities resulting from cases of child abuse and neglect;
- Expanding the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program for foster youth to age 23 and extending the educational training vouchers for youth to age 26; and
- Other measures that guide out-of-home non-foster family placements, maintain services and programs for children and families, and incentivize permanency through adoption and guardianship placements.

We appreciate your bipartisan, bicameral effort to address child welfare reform, and specifically, the longstanding policy priority to expand Title IV-E for prevention so that children and parents/caregivers have access to services and interventions that maintain family stability. While the bill presents an unprecedented opportunity and many of our key leaders have shared their perspectives and concerns with Committee staff, some members will need to fully examine and understand the implications of each Title and section on their states and localities. We will continue to monitor and assess the impact of each Title and section to identify and share with you any unintended consequences. With Congress' support, we can help to ensure that all children and families can develop and live to their full potential.

Again, thank you very much for your hard work. We look forward to working with you and encourage you to contact Christina Crayton, Assistant Director, Policy and Government Affairs with questions or to request additional information. Ms. Crayton may be reached at [ccrayton@aphsa.org](mailto:ccrayton@aphsa.org) or 202.682.0100 x257.

Respectfully submitted,



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