

COALITION IN SUPPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S BUDGET ACT

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1110 VERMONT AVENUE NW • SUITE 900 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

April 16, 2012

The United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator,

It's time to stop budgeting in the dark for America's children. That's why we, the undersigned organizations, are writing you today to ask for your support for S. 1396, the "Children's Budget Act," introduced by Senator Menendez.

Currently, there's no official way for the nation to tell whether our kids are being shortchanged. Fiscal Year 2012 marks the first time that discretionary spending on kids has declined two years in a row. Unfortunately, for most experienced policy analysts, that's impossible to know because there is no official way to determine how much of our budget goes to children. A recent study by First Focus concluded that in the last year, only 8.4% of the federal budget went to kids, even though they are nearly 25% of the population. As our most valuable asset for the future, our investments in children are too important to make in the dark.

The "Children's Budget Act" would require the President and the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) to submit an annual children's budget, a detailed accounting of all federal funding for children and children's programs. This process would be simple to implement and contain no additional cost. As we debate ways to improve our budget process, we should be sure that process is working for our children.

We know that kids who are healthy, well educated, and well cared for grow-up to be healthier, happier, and more productive adults. We know that investments in kids are some of the best investments our nation can make. What we don't know, is just how adequate or inadequate the federal government's investment is in kids.

With nearly one in every four children living in poverty, our nation's future depends on appropriately investing in our children. OMB is already required to report on funding for other areas of importance, including Homeland Security, the Export-Import Bank, and meteorology. Just as vital as those other areas, the "Children's Budget Act" would provide policymakers and parents a clear accounting of our investments for kids. If we are going to do better for our children tomorrow, we must know how we're doing today.

Thank you again for your efforts and commitment to safeguarding the future of America's children and we urge you to support the "Children's Budget Act." If you have any questions or would like to be a cosponsor, please contact Jared Solomon at 202-657-0679 or [jareds@firstfocus.net](mailto:jareds@firstfocus.net).

Sincerely,

## **National Organizations**

Alliance for Excellence Education  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association of School Administrators  
American Association on Health and Disability  
America's Promise Alliance  
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Dental Health Project  
Children's Health Fund  
Children's Home Society of America  
Coalition Addressing Trauma  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Covenant House  
Early Care and Education Consortium  
Every Child Matters  
Family Voices  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Forum for Youth Investment  
Foster Family-based Treatment Association  
FosterClub, National Network for Young People in Foster Care  
Mental Health America  
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Children's Museum  
National Collaboration for Youth  
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships  
National Council of La Raza  
National Education Association  
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
National Head Start Association  
National Human Services Assembly

National Indian Child Welfare Association  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
Nurse Family Partnership  
Prevent Child Abuse America  
Public Education Network  
Save Medicaid in Schools  
Save the Children  
School Social Work Association of America  
The American Psychiatric Association  
The Children's Partnership  
The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
Therapeutic Communities of America  
Voices for America's Children  
Voices for Progress  
Witness Justice  
Youth Villages, Inc

### **State Organizations**

Denali Family Services (AK)  
Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families  
Children Now (CA)  
Kids in Common (CA)  
Connecticut Commission on Children  
Connecticut Voices for Children  
Child and Family Policy Center (IA)  
Every Child Counts (IA)  
Bethel New Life (IL)  
Elev8 Chicago (IL)  
Connections for Abused Women and Their Children (IL)  
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law (IL)  
Voices for Illinois Children  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
Maine Children's Alliance  
Advocates for Children & Youth (MD)

Michigan's Children  
Missouri Partnership for Children  
Action for Children North Carolina  
Voices for Children in Nebraska  
Children's Alliance of New Hampshire (NH)  
Family Voices - New Jersey  
State Parent Advocacy Network of New Jersey  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York  
Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy  
Oklahoma Therapeutic Care Association  
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children  
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center  
SHELBY Child Impact Assessment (TN)  
Voices for Virginia's Children  
Children's Alliance (WA)  
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families