

October 30, 2015

The Honorable Bob Casey  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey, Senator Baldwin and Senator Brown:

On behalf of over 250 organizations, we thank you for your leadership in introducing the Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2015 (S. 2224).

One in five children in the US are living in poverty, and children continue to experience higher rates of poverty than any other age group in the US. Of all the people living in poverty in this country in 2014, 33 percent of them were children, yet children only comprise 23 percent of the total population. Black and Hispanic children experience higher rates of poverty than white children, with rates of 37 percent and 31 percent respectively compared to 12 percent for white children.

Poverty is a particularly serious problem for children, who are exposed to toxic stress and suffer negative effects for the rest of their lives after living in poverty for even a short time. Children in poverty experience increased rates of infant mortality, higher rates of low birth weight and subsequent health and developmental problems such as chronic disease. They also have worse educational outcomes with poor academic achievement and lower rates of high school graduation.

The Child Poverty Reduction Act would establish a national child poverty target with the goal of cutting child poverty in half in ten years and eliminating it within 20 years. To meet these goals, it charges a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Child Poverty with developing a plan, including recommendations to improve the coordination and efficiency of existing initiatives as well as recommendations for new legislation required to reach the target. It tasks the working group with monitoring progress toward the target at the federal and state levels.

Creating a national target to cut child poverty is not unprecedented. In 1999, the United Kingdom established a national child poverty target and measured in U.S. terms, the UK's Child Poverty Target and resulting policy changes cut Britain's child poverty rate by 50 percent during the effort's first decade (1999-2009). By contrast, the U.S. child poverty rate increased by over 20 percent between 2000 and 2013.

A national child poverty target will serve as a rallying cry for the government and other stakeholders to take concrete steps to meet this target. It institutionalizes the goal of reducing child poverty, and serves as an impetus for bipartisan public debate around the most effective interventions needed to achieve this target.

Cutting child poverty should be a top priority for our country. It is not only the right thing to do, but it makes smart economic sense. Child poverty costs the US more than \$672 billion a year, or 4 percent of gross domestic product.

We are grateful for your leadership and we look forward to working with you on this and other proposals to improve the well-being of America's children and youth.

Sincerely,

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

First Focus Campaign for Children

9to5

Alliance for a Just Society  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Association of Public Health Dentistry  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Orthopsychiatric Association  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association for Community Affiliated Plans  
Campaign for American's Future  
Center for Community Change Action  
Center for Rural Affairs  
Child's World America  
Children's Advocacy Institute  
Children's Health Fund  
Children's HealthWatch  
Children's Home Society of America  
CLASP  
Docs for Tots  
Elev8  
Every Child Matters  
Family Promise  
First Star  
Foster Family-based Treatment Association  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
HEAR US, Inc.  
Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.  
Islamic Relief USA  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
LEAnet  
Lutheran Services in America  
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership  
National Alliance of Children's Trust and  
Prevention Funds  
National Association for Bilingual Education  
National Association of School Nurses

National Association of Social Workers  
National Campaign to Prevent Teen and  
Unplanned Pregnancy  
National Center on Adoption and Permanency  
National Child Abuse Coalition  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Crittenton Foundation  
National Foster Parent Association  
National Organization for Women  
National WIC Association  
Network for Environmental & Economic  
Responsibility of United Church of Christ  
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice  
Lobby  
Nurse-Family Partnership  
Oral Health America  
Parents Anonymous, Inc.  
PICO Center for Health Organizing  
Provincial Council of the Clerics of St. Viator  
(Viatorians)  
Public Advocacy for Kids  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition  
RESULTS  
School-Based Health Alliance  
Shriver National Center on Poverty Law  
Sisters of Mercy of the American's Institute Justice  
Team  
The Arc of Multnomah/Clackamas  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent  
Health  
The Salvation Army National Headquarters  
Treatment Communities of America

## **STATE, TERRITORY AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **ALABAMA**

Alabama Chapter-American Academy of Pediatrics  
Alabama Food Bank Association  
VOICES for Alabama's Children

### **ALASKA**

AK Child & Family  
Juneau Youth Services

### **AMERICAN SAMOA**

American Samoa Department of Health

### **ARIZONA**

Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of  
Pediatrics  
Arizona State Dental Hygienists' Association

Child and Family Resources, Inc.

### **ARKANSAS**

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families  
KidSPOT  
The Living Affected Corporation  
United Way of Garland County, Inc.

### **CALIFORNIA**

Assoc. of CA School Administrators  
California Association of Food Banks  
California School Boards Association  
California School-Based Health Alliance  
Clinica Sierra Vista

Family Voices of California  
First 5 Santa Cruz County  
Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC)  
Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach  
Proteus, Inc.  
Service Center for Independent Life  
St. Joseph Health  
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health  
Western Center on Law and Poverty

#### **COLORADO**

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and  
Reproductive Rights  
Posada  
The Early Childhood Council of Boulder County

#### **CONNECTICUT**

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Jewish Community Relations Council of New  
Haven

#### **DELAWARE**

Delaware Center for Justice, Inc.  
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and  
Families

#### **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

RESULTS DC  
We Are Family Senior Outreach Network

#### **FLORIDA**

Democratic Women's Club of Florida  
Farmworker Association of Florida  
Florida's Children's First  
SF Voices for Working Families

#### **GEORGIA**

Kicklighter Resource Center

#### **HAWAII**

Waimanalo Health Center

#### **ILLINOIS**

Chicago Women's AIDS Project  
Children's Home and Aid  
EverThrive Illinois  
Kewanee Area United Way  
Logan Square Neighborhood Association  
National Council of Jewish Women Illinois State  
Policy Advocacy Network  
National Council of Jewish Women South Cook  
Section

National Council of Jewish Women, Chicago North  
Shore Section  
United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties

#### **INDIANA**

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Gary  
United Way of LaPorte County

#### **IOWA**

Child and Family Policy Center  
Iowa Mental Health Planning Council  
Iowa Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)  
Kingston Therapy Services  
NAMI Greater Des Moines  
NAMI Iowa  
Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa

#### **KANSAS**

Kansas Action for Children  
Kansas Children's Service League  
United Way of the Flint Hills

#### **KENTUCKY**

Covering Kentucky Kids and Families  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
NAMI Bowling Green  
The Center for Women and Families

#### **LOUISIANA**

Childhood & Family Learning Foundation  
United Way of Northwest Louisiana

#### **MAINE**

Bucksport Regional Health Center  
Families and Children Together  
Maine Children's Alliance  
United Way of York County

#### **MARYLAND**

Advocates for Children and Youth  
PeterCares House  
Public Justice Center  
The Family Tree/Prevent Child Abuse MD

#### **MASSACHUSETTS**

Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.  
Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice and the  
Environment  
Western Massachusetts Chapter of Bend the Arc

#### **MICHIGAN**

Detroit RESULTS  
Leelanau Children's Center

MI Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Michigan's Children  
Servants of Jesus  
Transition to Independence Program (TIP Wayne State)

**MINNESOTA**

Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare  
National Council of Jewish Women, Minnesota  
State Policy Advocacy Network  
State Policy Advocate Chair  
Sherburne County Area United Way

**MISSISSIPPI**

Sisters of Mercy

**MISSOURI**

God's Will In Action  
Heart of the Ozarks United Way  
Lutheran Family & Children's Services of Missouri  
National Organization for Women, Missouri  
Peace Economy Project  
Vision for Children at Risk

**MONTANA**

Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
Musikanten, Inc.

**NEBRASKA**

Food4Thought  
Nebraska Appleseed  
Panhandle Independent Living Services  
Voices for Children in Nebraska

**NEVADA**

Acting in Community Together in Organizing Northern Nevada  
Baby's Bounty  
Children's Advocacy Alliance  
Community Chest, Inc.  
Former First Lady of Nevada, Dawn Gibbons

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

NH Kids Count

**NEW JERSEY**

Advocates for Children of New Jersey  
Central Jersey Family Health Consortium  
Displaced Homemakers Network of NJ

New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.  
United Way of Gloucester County

**NEW MEXICO**

All Faiths  
La Familia-Namaste  
New Mexico Pediatric Society  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe  
RESULTS Albuquerque  
RESULTS- Santa Fe

**NEW YORK**

Claire Heureuse Community Center, Inc.  
Directions in Independent Living, Inc.  
Early Care & Learning Council  
Monroe Plan  
NYS Council of Churches  
Schuyler Center for Analysis & Advocacy  
The Children's Agenda  
The Children's Aid Society  
United Way of Buffalo & Erie County  
United Way of Greater Niagara

**NORTH CAROLINA**

Disability Rights NC  
Eagles Wings Food Pantry  
Goldsboro Pediatrics, PA  
NC Child  
United Way of Greater Greensboro  
United Way of Lincoln County

**NORTH DAKOTA**

North Dakota Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics

**OHIO**

Juvenile Justice Coalition  
Ohio Association of Foodbanks  
Ohio Children's Foundation  
ProgressOhio  
RESULTS Columbus  
SEM Food Pantry  
Single Payer Action Network of Ohio  
St. Jude Helping Hands of Elyria  
United Way of Hardin County  
Voices for Ohio's Children  
Westerville Area Resource Ministry (WARM)  
Westland Ecumenical Community Food Pantry

**OKLAHOMA**

Northwest Family Services

**OREGON**

Children's Trust Fund of Oregon  
Oregon Pediatric Society  
Oregon School-Based Health Alliance  
ROSE Community Development

**PENNSYLVANIA**

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania  
Humanitarianism First  
Keystone Progress  
PathWays PA  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children  
RHD HEART Services  
St. Christopher's Hospital for Children  
United Way of Adams County  
United Way of Wyoming Valley  
Upper Darby Learning Academy  
West Chester Food Cupboard

**RHODE ISLAND**

RI Parent Information Network

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Hilton Head for Peace

**TENNESSEE**

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

**TEXAS**

Embrace Texas

Greater Longview United Way  
Lesbian Health Initiative (LHI)  
National Association of Social Networks- Texas  
Chapter  
Texans Care for Children  
Voices for Children of San Antonio

**UTAH**

Children's Service Society  
Utah Chapter of the American Academy of  
Pediatrics

**VERMONT**

Voices for Vermont's Children

**VIRGINIA**

Social Action Linking Together (SALT)  
Voices for Virginia's Children

**WASHINGTON**

Kitsap County Domestic RESULTS Group  
Partners for Our Children  
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

**WEST VIRGINIA**

Children's Home Society of West Virginia

**WISCONSIN**

Board of Church & Society of the United  
Methodist Church, Wisconsin  
Howe Community Resource Center  
Still Point Zen Center  
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice