

February 27, 2018

The Honorable Mazie Hirono  
United States Senate  
730 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hirono:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children (FFCC), a national bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, I write today to thank you for introducing the *Fair Day in Court for Kids Act of 2018*.

As an organization dedicated to promoting the safety and well-being of all children in the United States, we urge both Congress and the Administration to uphold the best interest of the child in all decisions regarding the Central American humanitarian crisis, including addressing the conditions in the Northern Triangle causing children to flee and ensuring adequate resources are provided to children once they arrive in the United States.

It is our responsibility to ensure that children who are seeking refuge in the United States are not deterred from doing so and that our government provides the best protections and services to these vulnerable children during every step of the process. No child should be forced to face a courtroom alone, especially when the outcome may be a matter of life or death.

This bill would ensure that children seeking protection in the United States are guaranteed legal counsel in their immigration proceedings. Additionally, this bill would provide that the Secretary of Homeland Security ensure that unaccompanied minors have access to counsel inside all immigration detention and border facilities. All migrant children placed into removal proceedings should be provided legal representation and child advocates to increase their chances for obtaining immigration relief and to ensure consideration of their best interests. It is crucial that children are not put through additional trauma, and instead are provided with services and supports to ensure the best outcome for them.

We applaud you for introducing such important legislation, and we look forward to working with you to implement common sense policies that will help unaccompanied children thrive in the United States. Should you have any questions about this letter, please contact Kristen Torres at [Kristent@firstfocus.org](mailto:Kristent@firstfocus.org).

Sincerely,



Bruce Lesley  
President