



November 13, 2023

The Honorable Angus King  
133 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C 20510

Dear Senators King and Murkowski:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal budget and policy decisions, to express our support for the Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (PACE) Act, S. 3085.

ACEs are traumatic incidents in a child's life that have long-lasting, detrimental repercussions on a child's health, happiness, and opportunities. A heightened awareness of the link between ACEs and long-term health is increasingly vital. According to the CDC, ACEs are connected to chronic health issues, mental health conditions, and drug abuse in adulthood.<sup>1</sup> Decades of research have linked ACEs to an elevated risk of behavioral problems and chronic illnesses such as obesity, autoimmune disease, depression, cancer, coronary heart disease, and alcoholism.<sup>2</sup> Not only do ACEs affect people's health, but they also found that having several ACEs increases a person's chance of subpar academic performance and high unemployment rates.<sup>3</sup>

The PACE Act will help prevent ACEs and promote positive childhood experiences through grants for data-driven, evidenced-based strategies and activities that leverage multi-sector partnerships. The PACE Act will also support new studies, evaluation, and research on the prevention of ACEs, including through positive childhood experiences.

With the correct treatments and support, people who have experienced ACEs can overcome their difficulties and enjoy healthy, productive lives. Recognizing the effects of ACEs and taking action to avoid and resolve them is crucial for individuals, families, communities, and the country at large.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, April 2). Adverse childhood experiences (aces). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, April 2). Adverse childhood experiences (aces).

<sup>3</sup> EndCAN. (2021, January 20). Unwrapping the link between childhood trauma and health. EndCAN.

We are thankful that you have chosen to champion the Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences Act and we look forward to working with you on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop on the "L" and a long tail on the "y".

Bruce Lesley  
President