

# CAHS

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The Honorable John B. Larson  
District Office  
221 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Representative Larson:

As Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS), a statewide nonprofit organization that works to end poverty and to engage, equip, and empower all families in Connecticut to build a secure future, I am writing to ask you to co-sponsor H.R. 2477, the State Child Well-Being Research Act. This legislation would provide state and federal policymakers and advocates with information important to policies, program, and budget decision-making.

As the Connecticut KIDS COUNT grantee, CAHS knows first hand how central public data are for planning and advocacy purposes. Yet, accurate and timely data are hard to find. Often, the only numbers that are accessible are those related to specific programs such as TANF, Medicaid, or WIC. As a result, we lack an accurate picture of the situations of children who are not enrolled in public programs. Similarly, the American Community Survey and other national data sets do not include adequate sample sizes for small states such as ours.

Equally important is data comparability. We know that measurement methods differ from state to state, preventing data analysts from obtaining equivalent numbers for many child indicators from one state to the next. H.R. 2477 would provide for semi-annual data collection. A wide array of indicators would be included in the survey, across topics such as education, social and emotional development, health, safety, and family well-being. Additionally, data would be collected about the same children over time, providing us with rich information about the conditions that support healthy development.

Several foundations have committed resources to the survey, allowing for a productive partnership between the public and private sectors. We hope you see the benefit of the child well-being survey and join your colleagues in co-sponsoring this proposal. A CAHS staff member will call your office in the next few weeks to talk with your staff about the possibility of co-sponsorship.

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of Connecticut residents.

Sincerely,

James P. Horan  
Executive Director