



FIRST FOCUS

MAKING CHILDREN & FAMILIES THE PRIORITY

1110 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20005 | T: 202.657.0670 | F: 202.657.0671 | www.firstfocus.net |
October 9, 2009

The Honorable David Camp
United States House of Representatives
341 Cannon H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Camp:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you again for your leadership in introducing the State Child Well-Being Research Act of 2009 (H.R. 2558), bipartisan legislation that would provide much needed data on the condition of America's children in all 50 states. First Focus enthusiastically supports this legislation because state and federal policy makers need statistically meaningful state-level data on children in order to effectively and efficiently target resources where they would do the most good.

Over the past decade, as federal legislators have recognized that the needs of children vary greatly from state to state, states have been given much more responsibility for developing and administering programs for children and families that are funded with federal dollars. Unfortunately, states currently do not have the necessary data to do this most effectively. States need accurate, timely and reliable data about the children they serve, and the federal government needs this information in order to ensure that our scarce federal dollars are having the greatest positive impact. Furthermore, this data collection must be supported at the national level because states do not have the resources or technical expertise to carry out such a survey, and we must ensure that the data is comparable across states.

While there are currently some studies that provide limited information on child well-being in states, major gaps exist in the data available today. An analysis by Child Trends shows that national surveys do not have adequate sample sizes for most state-level analysis, and that state-level surveys are uneven and inconsistent. We are pleased that the State Child Well-Being Research Act will address these problems by expanding the National Survey of Child Health and allow the collection and dissemination of important data in every state. Data would be collected on a rolling basis, so that key data would be available every year and subgroup data every two years.

The information collected will allow states to make informed decisions on a wide array of programs that serve America's children and families. At a time when federal dollars are increasingly scarce and states struggle to balance their budgets, a small investment in this kind of data will enable states and the federal government to use their money more wisely and target resources where they are most needed. We appreciate your commitment to ensuring a bright future for our children, and we applaud you for your steadfast leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you on this needed legislation.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley
President, First Focus



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The Honorable Chaka Fattah
United States House of Representatives
2301 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Fattah:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you again for your leadership in introducing the State Child Well-Being Research Act of 2009 (H.R. 2558), bipartisan legislation that would provide much needed data on the condition of America's children in all 50 states. First Focus enthusiastically supports this legislation because state and federal policy makers need statistically meaningful state-level data on children in order to effectively and efficiently target resources where they would do the most good.

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The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
522 Hart S.O.B.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you again for your leadership in introducing the State Child Well-Being Research Act of 2009 (S. 1151), bipartisan legislation that would provide much needed data on the condition of America's children in all 50 states. First Focus enthusiastically supports this legislation because state and federal policy makers need statistically meaningful state-level data on children in order to effectively and efficiently target resources where they would do the most good.

Over the past decade, as federal legislators have recognized that the needs of children vary greatly from state to state, states have been given much more responsibility for developing and administering programs for children and families that are funded with federal dollars. Unfortunately, states currently do not have the necessary data to do this most effectively. States need accurate, timely and reliable data about the children they serve, and the federal government needs this information in order to ensure that our scarce federal dollars are having the greatest positive impact. Furthermore, this data collection must be supported at the national level because states do not have the resources or technical expertise to carry out such a survey, and we must ensure that the data is comparable across states.

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The Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senate
531 Hart S.O.B.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rockefeller:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you again for your leadership in introducing the State Child Well-Being Research Act of 2009 (S. 1151), bipartisan legislation that would provide much needed data on the condition of America's children in all 50 states. First Focus enthusiastically supports this legislation because state and federal policy makers need statistically meaningful state-level data on children in order to effectively and efficiently target resources where they would do the most good.

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The Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
United States Senate
154 Russell S.O.B.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Snowe:

I am writing on behalf of First Focus, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to thank you again for your leadership in introducing the State Child Well-Being Research Act of 2009 (S. 1151), bipartisan legislation that would provide much needed data on the condition of America's children in all 50 states. First Focus enthusiastically supports this legislation because state and federal policy makers need statistically meaningful state-level data on children in order to effectively and efficiently target resources where they would do the most good.

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