May 3, 2016

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael Bennet
458 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Barton
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kathy Castor
205 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Sens. Grassley and Bennet and Reps. Barton and Castor:

On behalf of Children’s Cause for Cancer Advocacy, we are writing to express our support for S. 298/H.R. 546, The Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act of 2015 (The ACE Kids Act). We thank you for your leadership in introducing this bipartisan legislation to improve care for children with medical complexity on Medicaid.

The Children’s Cause for Cancer Advocacy is a national policy and advocacy organization working to ensure that the voices of children with cancer, survivors and their families are heard in Washington, DC. Our mission is to advance policies that lead to the development of new and better therapies for children with cancer and address the needs and challenges of childhood cancer survivors.

Children with cancer, like children with other medical complexities, often see multiple specialists and a variety of physicians. There are over 30,000 children with cancer covered by the Medicaid system and the specialized care they require often takes them across state lines. Under the current Medicaid system, parents of children with cancer and other multiple, life threatening disabilities struggle to coordinate the complex, multi-state care of their kids. Only federal legislation can fix the fragmented system for children with medical complexity.

The ACE Kids Act creates an organized system of health care delivery for this unique population of children to ensure ready access across state lines and to reduce the burden on their families. Nationally designated children’s hospitals networks created under the ACE Kids Act would employ national quality standards and coordinate care, both essential to improving quality and saving money. These networks would include the full range of acute, post-acute and primary care providers, with children’s hospitals as anchors, and a focus on outpatient care to ensure children get the care that they need in the most appropriate settings closest to home, while reducing hospitalizations and emergency room visits.
We are honored to join the nation’s leading children’s hospitals, along the Children’s Hospital Association, to support this legislation, which is voluntary for states, families, children’s hospitals and other providers. The ACE Kids Act can deliver savings to Medicaid through increased efficiencies, including reducing hospitalizations and emergency room visits, while providing the array of outpatient and community services and support needed by these children.

Providing the best possible care for children with cancer and other medical complexity enrolled in Medicaid is a national challenge that needs a national solution and requires Congress to act. We thank you again for introducing the ACE Kids Act and we look forward to working with you to advance this legislation in Congress.

Sincerely,

George Dahlman
Chief Executive Officer
Children’s Cause for Cancer Advocacy