

THE CHILDREN'S BUDGET COALITION

INVESTING IN THEIR FUTURE

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC. 20515

Dear Senator Harris:

As members of the Children's Budget Coalition, we are writing to express our support for the Focus on Children Act. The Children's Budget Coalition is comprised of over 70 children and family advocacy organizations who are dedicated to ensuring that our nation's leaders prioritize children in the federal budget process. However, this objective is difficult given the wide array of issues specific or unique to children that span so many policy areas, covering dozens of agencies and bureaus. As a result, there is no simple method or widely agreed upon method by which we can accurately evaluate overall level of federal investment in children. Tracking the trend of spending on children relative to other federal programs over time can be equally challenging. We applaud your leadership in introducing the Focus on Children Act to address this issue by creating a deliberate and full accounting of federal spending on and for children.

Our budget reflects our values, and far too often children remain an afterthought in federal budget decisions. If we truly value our children, that must change. The Focus on Children Act would direct the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to submit annual, separate studies and reports to Congress that would provide detailed analysis of the diverse funding streams for children's programs across the federal government. The Focus on Children Act also would ensure that the data and spending trends identified by CBO would be available to the public, and communicate a clear and comprehensive picture of the share of federal dollars benefitting America's young people. This legislation is one easy, efficient step to help policymakers evaluate where children truly stand in our national priorities.

We are grateful for your leadership in this area, and we look forward to working with you to support passage of this important legislation designed to communicate how children are faring in federal budget decisions.

Sincerely,

First Focus Campaign for Children
Campaign for Youth Justice
Child Care Aware of America
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Health Fund
Citizens' Committee for Children
Communities In Schools, National Office
Every Child Matters
Futures Without Violence
Institute for Educational Leadership
Public Advocacy for Kids
Save the Children Action Network