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July 30, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair, Senate HELP
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chair, Senate Committee on Budget
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer, Chair Murray, and Chairman Sanders:

On behalf of the Children's Advocacy Institute, thank you lifting up and emphasizing the critical importance of funding child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment as part of the infrastructure package. As negotiations continue to present a budget reconciliation bill, we implore you to prioritize these investments to address, at long last, the profound misalignment with CAPTA's ambitious goals with the resources required to institute, execute, and enforce its provisions properly.

I've worked on this issue on behalf of CAI and others for over a decade, and recently published a piece, [*Making America's Children Safe Again, Advocating for CAPTA Reform and Beyond*](#) specifically addressing how chronic underfunding, the impact of weak statutory provisions, anemic long-haul investment, and poor oversight of the law compromises families and places children at greater risk of harm and CPS involvement. Increasing funding of CAPTA by \$2-3 billion over 10 years would make a big difference in advancing positive outcomes and working to address long-standing systemic inequity.

We are grateful for Chair Murray and Ranking Member Burr's leadership in drafting and advancing the powerful bipartisan CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2021. The bill lays out an inspiring vision for CAPTA, aligned with the recommendations of the bipartisan Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities, and consistent with evolved research and practice to protect the legal rights of children and parents in CPS cases.

But the promising bipartisan provisions pending in the Senate bill will only bear fruit if they are adequately funded, properly implemented, and carefully monitored. As you continue to dig into critical elements of infrastructure such as child care, paid leave, tax credits for families, we urge your continued support to boost CAPTA to live up to its promise to keep families safely together when possible, and when not, to provide the best possible services and outcomes for children in the child welfare system.

True champions for children are few and far between- thank you for being amongst them.

Sincerely,

Amy Harfeld