



May 11, 2018

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman, Senate Finance
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20010

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman, Energy & Commerce
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member, Senate Finance
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20010

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member, Energy & Commerce
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden; Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Pallone:

The undersigned organizations write today asking you to include S.1357 and H.R. 2290, bipartisan, bicameral legislation, the Family Based Care Services Act of 2017, this Congress as you approve opioid and substance abuse legislation. This legislation will help ensure that vital clinical services delivered by accredited and state licensed provider agencies are available for a highly vulnerable population of the children and youth involved in our nation's child welfare and foster care systems: children with disabilities, medically fragile conditions, mental illness, and/or severe developmental consequences of parental substance abuse.

With passage of FFPSA, S1357/HR2290 becomes more urgent. Youth with major mental and behavioral health problems who have been in congregate care will now be coming to the community. To appropriately attend to their high levels of need behaviorally and mentally, quality therapeutic family care (TFC) must be accessible.

Therapeutic Family Care (TFC) is a trauma-specific, evidence-informed intervention for youth with serious mental and/or behavioral health problems, who have been placed historically in congregate care, but who can be served in family homes in their own communities. When provided according to 'best practices', TFC offers a residential level of services delivered by specially trained and supported caregivers who form a treatment team with state-licensed and nationally accredited child-placing agencies. Each state determines its own criteria for authorization for TFC services; and when authorized by a state, treatment is provided wherever the youth resides: biological family, kinship family, non-relative foster home, or post-adoptive home.

If we do not pass S1357/HR2290 now, the youth described above will still come to their communities for services and in growing numbers due to the SUD crisis and passage of FFPSA. But we will have the same obstacles Congress addressed for group homes, that is no accreditation requirement for professional accountability and too much disparity in basic care and services. S1357/HR2290 provides this accountability, as well as increased transparency in use of Medicaid funds, while maintaining each state's independence to set their own authorization criteria.

TFC clinical services are already billed to and reimbursed by CMS. The legislation doesn't expand to include any new services; instead it describes current practice and adds professional standards, allowing states to build upon a uniform definition in their individual state plans.

The undersigned organizations ask for your continued commitment to protecting vulnerable children and youth in foster and kinship care. We ask that you move this legislation forward in the 115th Congress.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Children's Residential Centers
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Psychological Association
America's Promise Alliance
Anu Family Services

Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Arrow Child & Family Ministries
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Bair Foundation
BoysTown
CARF, International
Celine's Family Services, Inc.

Cenpatico
Center for Clinical Excellence and National Policy
Centerstone
Child and Family Policy Center
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Home Society of America
Children's Leadership Council
Choices for Life
Coalition on Human Needs
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
Eckerd
Family Focused Treatment Association
Family Preservation Community Services
First Focus Campaign for Children
Generations United
Juvenile Law Center
KidsPeace National Centers of North America
KVC
LEAnet (a national coalition of local education agencies)
Lutheran Services in America
Meritan, Inc.
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Assoc. of County Human Services Administrators
National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
National Association of County Behavioral Health and
Developmental Disability Directors

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Center for Housing and Child Welfare
National Center on Adoption and Permanency
National Child Abuse Coalition
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Crittenton Foundation
National Foster Parent Association
National Network for Youth
National Youth Advocate Program
Necco Family of Services
Omni Visions, Inc.
Pressley Ridge
Prevent Child Abuse America
Providence Service Corporation
Public Advocacy for Kids
Ray Helper Society
ResCare, Inc.
Rights 4 Girls
RISE Family Services & Intercept: RISE Behavioral & Mental
Health Services
SAFY of America, Inc.
School Based Health Alliance
Seraaj Family Homes, Inc.
Treatment Communities of America
Voice for Adoption
Youth Law Center
Youth Villages

cc. The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Charles Schumer, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader
The Honorable Dr. Michael Burgess, Chair E&C Health Subcommittee
The Honorable Gene Green, Ranking Member E&C Health Committee