

July 28, 2008

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

We, the undersigned organizations, write you today to urge your support for S. 3277, the "Children's Budget Act," which was introduced by Senator Robert Menendez of New Jersey. Over the past several years, many vital children's programs have experienced funding shortfalls, and overall, federal support for children's programs is on the decline. In fact, a recent report found that only one penny out of every new, real, non-defense dollar spent by the federal government went towards children over the past five years. As a result, the share of spending on children has declined by 10% over the past five years. These trends underline the fact that, far too often, children are an afterthought in the federal budget, not a priority.

In requiring the President to submit a children's budget, a detailed account of all the federal funding for children and children's programs, the "Children's Budget Act" will help direct more attention to the needs of America's young people. Currently, even experienced policy analysts have a difficult time determining how much the government invests in children, and therefore how the needs of our children might better be addressed. The "Children's Budget Act" would ensure that children are given due consideration whenever the budget is discussed, and would provide policymakers, program administrators and parents with a clear picture of the overall federal investment in our children.

Already, there are several state and local governments who produce a children's budget annually. These budgets have proven themselves to be an invaluable source of information as well as an easy and efficient way to improve the lives of all children. At the federal level, a Children's Budget would be simple to implement at no-cost and provide enormously beneficial information.

We can all agree that ensuring the well-being of our children should be at the top of our national agenda. Unfortunately, for too long, children have occupied only a peripheral place in federal budget decisions. By creating a children's budget at the federal level we can bring a renewed attention to children's issues and programs, and guarantee a fair look at our national investment priorities. If we hope to do better for our children tomorrow, we must know how we're doing today. Children make up one-quarter of our population, but they are all of our future.

We thank you again for your efforts and commitment to safeguarding the future of America's children and urge you to support the "Children's Budget Act." Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

First Focus	Washington	DC
Action for Children North Carolina	Raleigh	NC
Alliance for Excellent Education	Washington	DC
America Forward	Cambridge	MA
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology	Washington	DC
American Academy of Pediatrics	Washington	DC
American Association of School Administrators	Arlington	VA
American Dental Hygienists Association	Chicago	IL
American Humane Association	Alexandria	VA
American Pediatric Society	The Woodlands	TX
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children	Elmhurst	IL
American School Counselor Association	Alexandria	VA
America's Promise Alliance	Washington	DC
Anchorage's Promise	Anchorage	AK
Association for Children of New Jersey	Newark	NJ
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs	Washington	DC
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs	Chapel Hill	NC
Baltimore City Health Department	Baltimore	MD
Camp Fire USA	Washington	DC
Campaign for Youth Justice	Washington	DC
Child and Family Policy Center	Des Moines	IA
Children First for Oregon	Portland	OR
Children Now	Oakland	CA
Children's Aid Society	New York	NY
Children's Alliance	Seattle	WA
Children's Defense Fund	Washington	DC
Children's Healthcare is a Legal Duty	Sioux City	IA
Children's Memorial Hospital	Chicago	IL
Children's Partnership	Santa Monica	CA
Childworks, PLLC	Washington	DC
Citizen Schools	Boston	MA
Coalition for Juvenile Justice	Washington	DC
Colorado Children's Campaign	Denver	CO
Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico	Las Cruces	NM
Community Action New Mexico	Albuquerque	NM

Council for Opportunity in Education	Washington	DC
Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.	Fort Valley	GA
DC Action for Children	Washington	DC
DC Assembly On School Health Care	Washington	DC
Docs for Tots	Washington	DC
Economic Council Helping Others, Inc.	Farmington	NM
Family Voices	Albuquerque	NM
Family Voices of District of Columbia, Inc.	Washington	DC
Family Voices of New Jersey	Newark	NJ
Family Voices of North Dakota	Edgeley	ND
First Five Years Fund	Washington	DC
First Star	Washington	DC
Foster Care Alumni of America	Alexandria	VA
GLSEN - Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network	Washington	DC
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition	Chicago	IL
Jobs for the Future	Washington	DC
KaBOOM!	Washington	DC
Kansas Action For Children	Topeka	KS
Kentucky Child Now	Frankfort	KY
Kentucky Youth Advocates	Jeffersontown	KY
LEAnet	Los Angeles	CA
Learning Disabilities Association of America	Pittsburgh	PA
Maine Children's Alliance	Augusta	ME
Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet	Augusta	ME
Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership	Alexandria	VA
Michigan's Children	Lansing	MI
Mississippi Center for Justice	Jackson	MS
National Alliance for Medicaid in Education, Inc.		
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health	Washington	DC
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth	Washington	DC
National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies	Arlington	VA
National Association of Children's Hospitals	Alexandria	VA
National Association of Elementary School Principals	Alexandria	VA
National Association of School Psychologists	Bethesda	MD
National Association of Secondary School Principals	Reston	VA

National Association of State Directors of Special Education	Alexandria	VA
National Child Abuse Coalition	Washington	DC
National Collaboration for Youth	Washington	DC
National Community Action Foundation	Washington	DC
National Council of La Raza	Washington	DC
National Education Association	Washington	DC
National Foster Care Coalition	Washington	DC
National Foster Parent Association	Gig Harbor	WA
National Head Start Association	Alexandria	VA
National Healthy Start Association	Washington	DC
National Hispanic Medical Association	Washington	DC
National Indian Child Welfare Association	Portland	OR
National Parent Teach Association	Chicago	IL
New England Alliance for Children's Health	Boston	MA
New Jersey Commission on Higher Education	Trenton	NJ
New Mexico Alliance for School Based Health Care	Santa Fe	NM
New Mexico Voices for Children	Albuquerque	NM
Nurse Family Partnership	Denver	CO
Parents Reaching Out	Albuquerque	NM
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children	Harrisburg	PA
Pew Charitable Trusts	Washington	DC
Pre-K Now	Washington	DC
Public Citizens for Children and Youth	Philadelphia	PA
Public Education Network	Washington	DC
Reading Is Fundamental	Washington	DC
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT	Providence	RI
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law	Chicago	IL
Save the Children	Washington	DC
School Social Work Association of America	Indianapolis	IN
SingleStop USA	New York	NY
Society for Adolescent Medicine	Blue Springs The	MO
Society For Pediatric Research	Woodlands	TX
Society for Research in Child Development	Washington	DC
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center	Columbia	SC
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network of New Jersey	Newark	NJ

Tennessee Health Care Campaign	Nashville	TN
Tennessee Primary Care Association	Nashville	TN
Texans Care for Children	Austin	TX
The Forum for Youth Investment	Washington	DC
Upstate Parents Network	Greenville	SC
Virginia Poverty Law Center	Richmond	VA
Voices for Alabama's Children	Montgomery	AL
Voices for America's Children	Washington	DC
Voices for Georgia's Children	Atlanta	GA
Voices for Ohio's Children	Cleveland	OH
Voices for Utah Children	Salt Lake City	UT
Voices for Virginia's Children	Richmond	VA
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families	Madison	WI
YMCA of the USA	Washington	DC
YouthBuild USA	Somerville	MA