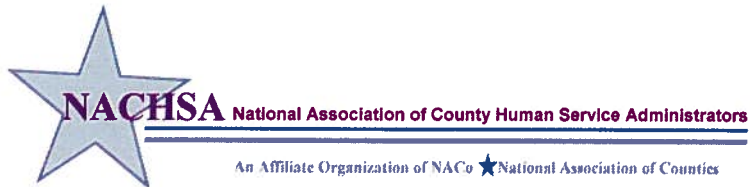




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To: Representatives and Senators

Re: The Importance of the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)

We hope you will carefully review the attached letter regarding the significant importance of the Social Services Block Grant. It is a critical source of funding to state and local programs that support children, the elderly, individuals with disabilities and victims of domestic violence.

CONTACTS:

Child Welfare League of America, John Sciamanna, jsciamanna@cwla.org

Generations United, Jaia Peterson Lent, JLent@gu.org

National Association of County Human Services Administrators, Tom Joseph, tj@wafed.com

The Social Services Block Grant

March 12, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

Representing a diverse coalition of groups serving vulnerable populations, the undersigned organizations support continued funding of the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). We have strongly opposed previous attempts to cut SSBG and will oppose any efforts to do so in 2015.

SSBG is a major funder for state and local child abuse prevention services, child protective services (CPS) and it supplements services for adoptions and for services to infants, children and youth in foster care. In some states, it is a significant source of local funding for adult protective services.

Congress cut SSBG funding when TANF was enacted into law and when funding was needed for a 1998 transportation bill, with the assumption that at some point it would return to its former level of \$2.8 billion. *SSBG was never restored.* We are concerned that some members may again propose to use SSBG for deficit reduction or to fund specific human services programs. SSBG funding has already been used to cut the deficit and rather than using the funds for specific needs identified at the federal level, the strength of the current program lies in its flexibility to allow state and local governments to determine how best to use the funds to meet local needs.

The champions of SSBG have included the leadership from both parties. In past congresses SSBG has had bipartisan support on both the House Ways and Means committee and the Senate Finance Committee. We hope this will be true again.

SSBG is a vital and flexible funding source helping children, older adults and people with disabilities in a range of ways. The outcome results for SSBG are clear, in 34 states more caseworkers are available to investigate reports of child abuse and because of SSBG 36 states can provide services for victims of domestic violence and victims of elder abuse. It supports services for those adults in jeopardy of entering a nursing home or institution and helps to fill the numerous state and local budget gaps in areas as diverse as senior services, mental health services, and services to people with disabilities. SSBG supports children in need of child care, children and youth who have been abused and neglected, foster youth in need of transitional services, and a range of low income individuals and families. Cutting or further targeting SSBG will inevitably harm vulnerable populations.

The undersigned organizations urge you to protect SSBG.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Indian Mothers Inc.
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
American Psychological Association
Americans for Democratic Action
The Arc
Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
Association of University Centers on Disability
Center for Elder Care and Advanced Illness, Altarum Institute
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Children & Family Futures
Children's Leadership Council
Child Welfare League of America
Coalition on Human Needs
The Dalton Daley Group
Donaldson Adoption Institute
Easter Seals
Elder Justice Coalition
Every Child Matters
First Focus Campaign for Children
Foster Care to Success
Foster Family-based Treatment Association
Futures Without Violence
Generations United
Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
The Jewish Federations of North America
John Burton Foundation
Justice in Aging
The Kempe Foundation
Lakeshore Foundation
LeadingAge
Lutheran Services in America
Meals on Wheels America
National Adult Day Services Association
National Adult Protective Services Association
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of County Human Services Administrators
National Association of Counties
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs
National Association of Social Workers
National Center on Adoption and Permanency
National Child Abuse Coalition
National Council on Aging
National Crittenton Foundation
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Respite Coalition
National WIC Association
New Ways To Work
North American Council on Adoptable Children
Prevent Child Abuse America
Provincial Council of the Clerics of St. Viator
Standing Up for Rural America
Voice for Adoption
Zero To Three
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.