May 3, 2019

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin U.S. Senate 709 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kim Schrier U.S. House of Representatives 1123 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Bill Cassidy U.S. Senate 520 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steve Stivers U.S. House of Representatives 2234 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Baldwin, Senator Cassidy, Representative Schrier, and Representative Stivers:

The below signed organizations write to express our strong support for the *Early Detection to Stop Infant Abuse and Prevent Fatalities Act (S.1009/H.R. 2076),* and to thank you for your bipartisan leadership on preventing child abuse injuries and fatalities.

According to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, an estimated 1,720 children died from abuse or neglect in the United States in fiscal year 2017. Half of those deaths involved infants under the age of 1, and nearly three-quarters involved children younger than three. Multiple studies have found that seemingly minor injuries in young infants are often actually indicators of abuse. Such injuries are often overlooked by medical providers, caregivers, and child welfare professionals because they seem trivial and are not recognized as signs of abuse. Without early intervention, physical abuse can escalate, resulting in severe injuries or even fatalities.

Your legislation will support our efforts to prevent child abuse injuries and fatalities by creating a demonstration program within the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) to test effective practices for improving early detection and management of injuries indicative of potential abuse in infants. This will help provide us with the tools that are urgently needed to recognize the earliest signs of abuse in those children at the highest risk for physical harm and intervene to protect them.

The reauthorization of CAPTA provides an opportunity to invest in a system to provide access to core services to strengthen families, improve child well-being and prevent harm and maltreatment through a public health approach to child abuse prevention and treatment. This legislation will support that approach by helping improve early identification efforts to ensure infants receive the needed attention to keep them safe and place them on a trajectory to thrive.

Thank you again for your leadership in working to protect children from abuse.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities American Academy of Pediatrics American Psychological Association Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs Child and Family Policy Center Children Now Children's Home Society of America Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Children's Advocacy Institute MomsRising National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners National Association of Social Workers National Center for Child Abuse Statistics & Policy Ohio Children's Hospital Association Saint Francis Ministries Seattle Children's VOICES for Alabama's Children