Dear Leaders McConnell and Reid:

As organizations representing advocates for America’s children and families, we write in support of the children of Flint, Michigan, as they grapple with urgent infrastructure and health needs concerning their water contamination situation.

We know that members of both political parties in the Senate are affronted by whatever circumstances led to these conditions confronting the citizens of Flint.

We are also mindful of the great history of our nation to respond to both man-made and natural disasters: Murrah Federal Building bombing, Hurricane Katrina, ice-storms in Atlanta, and tornadoes in the mid-west from Oklahoma, to Joplin, to Ohio. Now, the water contamination emergency in Flint demands our immediate attention and response.

These children and families have waited almost two years for recognition of their deteriorating infrastructure and health conditions. Now that this tragedy is exposed, we ask you to act promptly to provide monetary and consulting assistance to improve Flint’s water system to acceptable standards. It is also important to act quickly to address the medical, developmental, and educational consequences of lead-contaminated water. The developing bodies and brains of children cannot wait. Their physical development and psychological recovery must begin now and will need response for some time into the future.

We applaud the amendment by Senators Stabenow and Peters to provide immediate infrastructure funding relief and to examine through further study the long-term impacts of lead exposure, so that future consequences of this tragedy are appropriately and accurately addressed for these citizens and for all of America’s communities that may become victims of similar circumstances. The urgency of this situation requires that there be no delay caused by arguments over offsets; nor should other human needs programs that assist our nation’s children and families be cut to pay for addressing this crisis.

We strongly urge you to provide emergency funding now to address this crisis. Please forge an agreement now on behalf of children and vulnerable families who are unable to advocate for basic needs such as clean water.

Thank you for your leadership on behalf of these children and families.
Sincerely,

9to5
AFL-CIO
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
California Black Health Network
Center for Law and Social Policy
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Leadership Council
Citizen's Committee for Children
Every Child Matters Education Fund
First Focus Campaign for Children
Florida Chapter of Am. Academy of Pediatrics
Foster Family-based Treatment Association
Juvenile Law Center
Kempe Center (Aurora, CO)
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds
National Association for Bilingual Education
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of Working Women
National Center on Adoption and Permanency
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Foster Parent Association
National Hispanic Medical Association
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
New Mexico Voices for Children
Nurse-Family Partnership/National Service
School-Based Health Alliance
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Justice Team
USAAction
ZERO TO THREE
CC. Sen. Lisa Murkowski
    Sen. Maria Cantwell
    Sen. Jim Inhofe
    Sen. Barbara Boxer