



® June 17, 2016

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The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman, House Ways and Means
Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander M. Levin
Ranking Member, House Ways and Means
Committee
1106 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Levin:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) thanks you for your commitment to the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable children and your efforts to do so under the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 (H.R. 5456).

There are a number of prevention provisions CSAC particularly welcomes, but we are very concerned about Title II of the bill, since it will negatively affect state and county efforts underway to accomplish the same objectives to reduce reliance on congregate care whenever possible and appropriate. California's counties are working tirelessly with the state to implement a Continuum of Care Reform by January 1, 2017. Unfortunately, some of the federal provisions conflict with our initiatives and other federal mandates in the bill which overlay our efforts will make it even more costly for the counties and state to implement the CCR. Separate reviews done by the state Department of Social Services and the County Welfare Directors Association of California validate our concerns.

Counties have the administrative and full non-federal financial responsibility under IV-E foster care to ensure that our services are in the best interest of the child. We urge you consider a provision to allow our state to continue its leadership in developing a robust state and county approach to ensure that placements are with foster families whenever possible. The federal provisions, unfortunately, will further complicate a collaborative and very complex process of implementing very similar reforms in our state.

Please contact me or our Washington Representative Tom Joseph at tj@wafed.com or 202.898.1446 should you have any questions.

Thank you for your attention to our views.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Z. Cate".

Matt Cate
CSAC Executive Director

cc: California Congressional Delegation