



June 20, 2008

The Honorable Jim McDermott
Chair, Subcommittee on Income
Security and Family Support
United States House of Representatives
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Weller
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Income Security and Family Support
United States House of Representatives
108 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McDermott and Ranking Member Weller:

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), representing hundreds of public and private child-serving member agencies located in all fifty states, supports your legislation, the Fostering Connections to Success Act. We appreciate your leadership and hard work at crafting a bipartisan bill that will take some significant strides in reforming our nation's child welfare system.

This bill takes an important and critical step forward in recognizing the vital role of kinship placements in moving children in foster care towards a permanent and loving family. We are pleased that the bill makes changes to Title IV-E, provides funding for innovative programs such as kinship navigators, family-finding programs and family group decision making and requires notification of relatives when a child comes in to care.

In addition to these improvements, this legislation advances several other key priorities for CWLA. These include allowing tribes to have direct access to Title IV-E funds; extending training funds to child welfare private agencies; allowing states to extend support to foster youth up to age 21, and making improvements to both the education and health care planning for children in foster care.

We also extend our support to those provisions that would strengthen the adoption incentive funds.

CWLA joins with you in your efforts to move this legislation forward in the next few months. The need to address kinship care, to provide access to tribal nations, to strengthen our efforts to youth in care as well as strengthening adoptions are important issues that need to be addressed. We look forward to working with you, all members of the House, and all members of Congress as this legislation moves forward.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine James-Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine James-Brown
President/CEO