



March 1, 2019

To: Michigan's Congressional Delegation Members

From: Community Hope
Early On Michigan Foundation
HighScope Educational Research Foundation
Hope Starts Here Imperative #2 – IMPACT Detroit
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start
Michigan League for Public Policy
Michigan's Children
National Association of Social Workers- Michigan Chapter
Starfish Family Services
Wexford-Missaukee Child Protection Council
Retired Teacher Pre-K - K, Monroe and Romeo Schools

When children and youth experience trauma through abuse or neglect, the effects on their well-being are costly to society – according to a 2012 study by Prevent Child Abuse America, the total yearly cost of a child experiencing abuse or neglect in the United States is \$63,871 from both reduced economic productivity and from increased health care, education, and criminal justice costs to treat the effects. Extrapolating that number to our state's entire population of confirmed abuse and neglect cases for one year – 39,552 in 2016, according to the most recent Kids Count Data Book, child abuse and neglect cost Michigan taxpayers approximately \$2.5 billion annually. Because of the tremendous social and economic costs of abuse and neglect, the public has a legitimate interest in preventing trauma from abuse and neglect.

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) is a cornerstone resource for child abuse and neglect prevention in Michigan. CAPTA Title II Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention grants support direct services which are proven by research to prevent child abuse and neglect by increasing parenting knowledge, strengthening social and emotional connections, and providing access to concrete resources during times of need. These services include: parent peer groups, parenting education classes including "infant sleep safety" training, respite child care, resource referral, body safety classes for children and other in-school education opportunities, and baby pantries. CB-CAP also supports "Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Council" grants to public or private agencies at the county level to raise community awareness of child abuse, to work with public and private actors to identify local needs relating to child abuse and neglect, and to coordinate with local stakeholders a strategy

for preventing abuse and neglect. CAPTA resources also support various state department efforts including “birth match” services that identify parents who have had their rights terminated to inform prevention strategies.

Our state has historically dedicated resources from branded license plate sales and an optional income tax check-off to supplement CAPTA funds for abuse and neglect prevention, but unfortunately, those have declined significantly over the last twenty years. The potential reauthorization of CAPTA with increased funding for grants to states provides an opportunity for Michigan to re-commit to protecting our most vulnerable children and youth.

We the undersigned early childhood advocate organizations, which represent constituents both in your district and across our state, urge you to support:

1. Prioritizing the reauthorization of CAPTA at a \$500 million level for Title I and for Title II in the first year of reauthorization, and ramping up to \$1 billion for each title over 5 years.
2. Prioritizing full funding of CAPTA through the appropriations process to fully fund a reauthorized CAPTA.

We thank you for your service to our state’s most vulnerable children and youth and urge you to support this impactful federal program through its reauthorization and through the appropriations process.