

June 5, 2018

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Barton
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kathy Castor
2052 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Sens. Grassley and Bennet, and Reps. Barton and Castor:

On behalf of the National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, I write to express our support for S. 428 and H.R. 3325, The Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act of 2017 (The ACE Kids Act). We thank you for your leadership in introducing this bipartisan legislation to improve care for children with complex medical conditions on Medicaid.

Children with complex medical conditions have chronic life-limiting illnesses and disabilities, often see six or more specialists and a dozen or more physicians, and require care that takes them across state lines. Under the current Medicaid system, parents of children with multiple, life-threatening disabilities struggle to coordinate the complex care of their kids, which often requires care of providers in several states. Only federal legislation can fix the fragmented system for children with complex medical conditions that require regional care.

The ACE Kids Act creates a patient-centered, pediatric-focused delivery system for this unique population of children to ensure ready access to care across state lines and reduce the burden on these children's families. Specially-designed health homes created for children with complex medical conditions under the ACE Kids Act would employ national quality standards and coordinate care, both essential to improving quality of care and lowering costs. These health homes would include the full range of acute, post-acute and primary care providers, as well as behavioral health professionals. The health homes would focus on outpatient care to ensure children get the care that they need in the most appropriate settings closest to home, while reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

The ACE Kids Act, which is voluntary for states, families and providers, can deliver savings to Medicaid through increased efficiencies, including reducing hospitalizations and emergency room visits, while providing the array of outpatient and community services and support needed by these children. We are happy to support this important legislation.

Providing children with complex medical conditions enrolled in Medicaid the best possible care is a national challenge and the ACE Kids Act will bring us closer to ensuring these vulnerable children receive the care they need. Thank you for championing the ACE Kids Act. We look forward to working with you to advance this critical legislation this year.

Sincerely,



Patricia Johnston
Executive Director

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Little Rock, Arkansas

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Northwood Children's Services
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