



July 10, 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:

The Tricare for Kids Coalition is a stakeholder group of children's health care advocacy and professional organizations, disability advocacy groups, military and veterans' service organizations and military families committed to ensuring that Tricare meets the unique health needs of the more than two million children of military families covered by Tricare.

While all children have unique needs as compared to adults, military children face unique experiences due to the very nature of their parents' service.

The Coalition writes to express 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 many physicians and specialists, 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. Only federal legislation can fix the fragmented system for children with complex medical conditions that require regional care.

While military families may not be the first population that comes to mind when considering the ACE Kids Act, it is imperative to note that more than 200,000 children of active duty and retiree military families covered by Tricare are also relying on Medicaid for coverage pertaining to their complex medical conditions.

The ACE Kids Act helps ensure a patient-centered, pediatric-focused delivery system for this unique population of children to ensure ready access to care and reduce the burden on these children's families, specifically, coordination and integration of care among families and providers, which is critical for highly mobile military families who move frequently.

Furthermore, the ACE Kids Act has promise as a model for care coordination and integration, that could help to transform complex pediatric care in Tricare and the military health system (MHS). One of the key findings of a recent Defense Health Board report on pediatric care is the continued and longstanding need for better care coordination for families of children with special and complex care needs, especially as these families PCS (move) across the country.

The Tricare for Kids Coalition supports the ACE Kids Act both in order to meet the needs of military families whose children rely on Medicaid, and as a potential model for care coordination within Tricare and the military health system.

Providing children of military families with complex medical conditions enrolled in Medicaid the best possible care is a national challenge; the ACE Kids Act will bring us closer to ensuring these vulnerable children receive the care they need, as well as build a foundation that may be able to serve as a model for improved care coordination for mobile military families.

We thank you for championing the ACE Kids Act and look forward to working with you to advance this critical legislation this year.

Sincerely,

Kara Tollett Oakley

Kara Tollett Oakley

Chair