



Children's Advocacy Institute



## **THE PROTECT OUR KIDS ACT OF 2011** **Fact Sheet**

### **What is the Protect Our Kids Act?**

- Introduced on December 13, 2011 in the Senate as S 1984 and in the House as HR 3653, the Protect Our Kids Act is part of a comprehensive national strategy to address the current crisis of child abuse and neglect fatalities.
- Supported by a bipartisan coalition of concerned members of Congress, the bill follows up on a July 2011 GAO Report, "Child Fatalities from Maltreatment: National Data Could be Strengthened," and stems from the advocacy of an array of child welfare and other organizations.

### **Why do we need the Protect Our Kids Act?**

- More than six million children in the U.S. are reported abused and neglected each year.
- Child abuse or neglect contributes to the death of more than 1,700 children each year. Most are less than 4 years old, and half are under a year.
- These numbers - while staggering - in fact tell only a fraction of the story. Since child abuse and neglect are grossly underreported in this country, the number of children who suffer is likely many times greater than the data suggest.
- Moreover, child abuse deaths represent a national tragedy that is preventable through reform of the country's child abuse and neglect statutes and policies.
- We lack a national standard for reporting maltreatment-related child fatalities and near fatalities. The reporting requirements currently in federal law are not uniformly followed by states, and there is no enforcement of these requirements.

### **What will the Protect Our Kids Act Accomplish?**

Establish the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities, comprised of a variety of professionals with diverse experience and perspectives, in order to:

- Make recommendations for the development of best practices by studying and evaluating federal, state, and private child welfare systems;
- Develop a national strategy to prevent child abuse and reduce abuse and neglect fatalities;
- Develop a national standard for reporting child abuse fatalities, providing the ability to more accurately measure the scope of this tragedy and obtain data that will catalyze meaningful reform;
- Provide comprehensive recommendations for all levels of government on actions that will reduce fatalities due to neglect;
- During the work of the Commission and at the completion of its work, submit a reports including findings on best practices and policies, possible legislation, and other corrective strategies that will be available to the public.

### **Who Supports the Protect Our Kids Act?**

S 1984 was introduced by John Kerry (D-MA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) and co-sponsored by:

Sen. Mark Begich [D-AK]

Sen. Daniel Akaka [D-HI]

HR 3653 was introduced by Lloyd Doggett (D-TX25) and co-sponsored by:

Rep. Xavier Becerra [D-CA31]

Rep. Earl Blumenauer [D-OR3]

Rep. Joseph Crowley [D-NY7]

Rep. John Lewis [D-GA5]

Rep. James McDermott [D-WA7]

Rep. Richard Neal [D-MA2]

Rep. William Pascrell [D-NJ8]

Rep. Charles Rangel [D-NY15]

Rep. Fortney Stark [D-CA13]

Rep. Ronald Kind [D-WI3]

Rep. Karen Bass [D-CA33]

Rep. Russ Carnahan [D-MO3]

Rep. Michael Honda [D-CA15]

Rep. Dennis Kucinich [D-OH10]

Rep. Jerrold Nadler [D-NY8]

Rep. John Tierney [D-MA6]

### **Advocacy Organizaitons Supporting the Protect Our Kids Act**

A Child Is Missing, Inc.

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Professional Society for the Abuse of Children

Catholic Health Initiatives

Children's Advocacy Institute

Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)

Community Action Partnership

Every Child Matters Education Fund

First Star

National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds

National Center for the Review and Prevention of Child Deaths

National Child Abuse Coalition

National Coalition to End Child Abuse Deaths

Orthodox Catholic Church

Sisters of Presentation

Stop It Now!

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education

Alliance for Children and Families

American Psychological Association

Benedictine Sisters

Center for Public Policy Priorities

Children Without A Voice USA

Coalition on Human Needs

Council for Opportunity in Education

First Focus

Franciscan Action Network

National Association of Social Workers

National Child Protection Training Center

National Children's Alliance

National Collaboration for Youth

Prevent Child Abuse America

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

United Methodist Women

World Knowledge Bank