

S. 462, the Emergency Funding for Child Protection Act

Introduced by Senator Casey

While Congress has taken important steps to respond to COVID-19, we are only beginning to understand the broader societal implications of the pandemic. Research by the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC suggests that stress from the 2008 recession led to an increase in child abuse, and the current crisis combines the stress of an economic downturn with that of a public health emergency.¹ We have seen roughly a year of economic stress and social isolation, yet the pandemic weighs on, stretching many of our Nation's families beyond the breaking point. There is a clear need for services from government and non-profit organizations that can support children and families as they navigate the unprecedented stress of this global pandemic. However, those organizations face unique challenges from the pandemic, including the risk posed by conducting home visits and the expenses involved with investing in new technology for virtual visits.

The Emergency Funding for Child Protection Act will provide significant, new emergency funding to support children and families who may be in vulnerable situations. It will provide \$500 million for child protective services through the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) state grant program. This money will be flexible and available for a range of emergency uses, including investments in technology, personal protective equipment for caseworkers and emergency supports for children and families, such as food, cleaning supplies and diapers. The Emergency Funding for Child Protection Act will also include an extra \$1 billion for CAPTA's Community Based Child Abuse Prevention program, which will go to organizations that work on the ground to prevent abuse by strengthening families that are under stress. This money will also be flexible and available to expand services from those organizations, bolster state helplines and help families with their health and material needs. Finally, this legislation will provide \$2 million in emergency funding for the National Child Abuse Hotline.

We have been battling the novel coronavirus for an entire year, and it is clear that we must do more to shore up our communities and safeguard the wellbeing of children and families. The Emergency Funding for Child Protection Act will bolster state and local efforts to accomplish this at a time when it is a critical necessity.

Endorsements

A list of groups that have endorsed this legislation is included on page two of this document.

Cosponsorship

To cosponsor the Emergency Funding for Child Protection Act, please contact Doug Hartman with Senator Bob Casey's office at Doug_Hartman@help.senate.gov.

¹ <https://www.chp.edu/news/050110-child-abuse-increased>

Endorsements

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
American Academy of Pediatrics
Children and Family Futures
Children's Trust Fund Alliance
Committee for Children
National Association of Social Workers

National Center on Shared Leadership Inc
National Child Abuse Coalition
Parents Anonymous Inc.
Prevent Child Abuse America
Strengthening Families All Around the World Inc.
Zero to Three