



FIGHTING for PENNSYLVANIA FAMILIES

Family Strengthening Infrastructure Act

U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM)

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) plays a key role in preventing and addressing child abuse and neglect for millions of children, and is a cornerstone of our nation's child welfare system. Title I of CAPTA provides funding to States Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies to protect children in danger, and Title II provides funding to support community-based services that connect families with services and supports they need to ensure their children's safety.

However, CAPTA has been chronically underfunded for decades, imperiling our most vulnerable children and families and leaving states unable to fully meet their needs. In Fiscal Year 2022, \$293.5 million was awarded to 50 States and territories to implement CAPTA, with many states receiving as little as

\$214,243 in Title I funding. With so little support to implement the law, recent reports reveal that not a single state upholds all 27 provisions of CAPTA.

Chronic underfunding is an issue that has also been addressed by congressional commissions. Signed into law in 2013, the bipartisan Protect our Kids Act of 2012 created a U.S. Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities. The Commission published its final report in 2016 recommending that Congress authorize additional CAPTA funding to combat preventable child abuse and neglect fatalities.

Underfunding CAPTA means that not all states have the resources to track child fatalities or near fatalities resulting from maltreatment. The result is incomplete protection for our most vulnerable children. It is critical to make good on our commitment to the most vulnerable children and families in America by ensuring States have enough resources to protect them.

The ***Family Strengthening Infrastructure Act*** does just that. The bill would amend CAPTA to authorize additional funding for Titles I and II to ensure State CPS systems have adequate supports for children in crisis while providing community-based partners have sufficient resources to keep children safe and secure, preventing, unnecessary family separations and foster care placements.

Specifically, the legislation:

- Authorizes an additional \$250 million for Title I for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2033 to improve response to child maltreatment;
- Authorizes an additional \$250 million for Title II for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2033 to support community-driven, evidence-based and trauma-informed services that strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment and child welfare system involvement; and
- Requires eligible States and territories to expend the same amount, or more, of State and territory funds to carry out CAPTA programs.