

The Social Services Block Grant Coalition

March 22, 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

Representing a diverse coalition of groups serving vulnerable populations, the undersigning organizations urge Congress to increase funding to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) by several billion dollars to respond to the growing needs of older people, children and families, and people with disabilities in the midst of COVID-19.

SSBG is a proven key source of support to help communities respond to critical needs in national disasters and an important tool in times of recession because it can provide assistance to cash strapped states quickly. It has been used to assist states hit by catastrophic hurricanes including Katrina and Wilma. Funds were allocated according to FEMA claims and poverty. It served not just states directly hit, but also those states taking in people seeking refuge from the storms. In response to COVID-19 a formula could be used based on positive tests and surges in states. These funds can fill in some of the gaps not covered by other programs and backfill a number of human services. This also needs to include a set-aside for Tribes, which does not exist in current Title XX statute.

SSBG is a major funder to states and counties to help the most vulnerable people, including those services are under extreme increased pressure as a result of COVID-19 such as: child abuse prevention services, child protective services (CPS), child care, children and youth in foster care, adult protective services, Meals on Wheels, domestic violence services, and services for people with disabilities. The coming days will provide many challenges to the provider and non-profit communities, SSBG can provide needed resources to help address those challenges.

As Congress creates packages to response to COVID-19, we strongly urge increased support for SSBG to respond to the most vulnerable—our nation’s older adults, children and families, and people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

African American Health Alliance
Alliance for Children’s Rights
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Impact Movement
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
Association of Children's Residential Centers (ACRC)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bread for the World

Child Welfare League of America
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Law Center
Coalition on Human Needs
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Elder Justice Coalition
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Fiscal Policy Institute
The Forum For Youth Investment
Foster Kinship
Generations United
The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice in Aging
Meals on Wheels America
Medicare Rights Center
National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA)
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of Counties (NACo)
National Association of County Human Services Administrators
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National
PLACE)
National Council on Aging
National Organization of State Associations for Children
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
The National Respite Coalition
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)
Prevent Child Abuse America
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Saint Francis Ministries
Swipe Out Hunger
Voice for Adoption
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)
Youth Villages
ZERO TO THREE