

National Coalition on Children and Disasters

*c/o Save the Children US Programs
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036*

December 13, 2011

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Children and Families
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski:

The National Coalition on Children and Disasters is a community of over 25 child-serving national organizations that advocates for policies that ensure the well-being of children and their families in the preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural or man-made disasters. As members of the Coalition, we write in support of your proposed amendment to S.1855, the *Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act Reauthorization of 2011*, which would create a National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Children comprise nearly twenty-five percent of the U.S. population, yet in times of disaster their unique needs historically have been unmet by the federal government and non-federal partners. Over the past three years, the National Commission on Children and Disasters helped focus attention on gaps in disaster planning and delivered practical recommendations to the President and Congress. As a result, important progress has been made at various federal agencies and at the state and local level for children. With the termination of the Commission, a National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters will help ensure that progress continues. Importantly, the Advisory Committee will bring together federal and non-federal partners to provide guidance and recommendations on our nation's preparedness to meet the needs of children before, during and after a disaster or public health emergency. It is our hope that the Advisory Committee also will comprehensively assess progress toward fulfilling the recommendations of the National Commission on Children and Disasters.

The National Coalition on Children and Disasters advocates on behalf of policies that effectively ensure the well-being of children and their families in the preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural or man-made disasters in the United States.

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Thank you for offering this amendment and for your unwavering commitment to our nation's 75 million children. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues as S.1855 moves through Congress.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
Children's Health Fund
Habitat for Humanity
National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
National Association of Children's Hospitals
National Center for Disaster Preparedness, Columbia University
National Council on Crime and Delinquency
Save the Children
Trust for America's Health

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