**National Children’s Alliance 2022 Leadership Conference - Legislative Priorities**

**Thank you:**

We want to thank you for your continued and consistent support of Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs) through action and legislation passed over the past year. Specifically, we want to thank you for:

* Passing H.R. 1652, *VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund (the VOCA Fix)*
* Releasing as much funding as possible for VOCA grants ($2.6 B in FY22; $2.065B in FY21; $2.65B in FY20)
* Continually increasing funding the *Victims of Child Abuse Act* the past **TEN** **years** (most recently to $33 million.)

In the coming year, we look forward to continuing to work with you on:

**VOCA – Bridging the Gap**

* Thank offices for supporting the VOCA Fix last year. The Fix is important to refilling the Crime Victims Fund; however, the CVF is refilling slower than previously anticipated.
* Ask for their support to encourage DOJ to continue educate and train Asst US Attorneys (AUSAs) on the tools they have in assessing fines/fees on criminal cases, and that these fines impact the healing of victims of crimes.

**Victims of Child Abuse Act Funding – FY23**

Federal funding for the *Victims of Child Abuse Act* provides grants and seed money for the development of CACs, and for the training and technical assistance for child abuse professionals. This funding is the only federal funding solely dedicated to CACs, and with the impacts of COVID and VOCA cuts, **we are currently urging Congress provide at least $50 million in funding in the FY23 budget for VOCAA.** We understand the tough budget climate and greatly appreciate the FY21 funding level of $30 million; however more is needed.

* *The President’s FY22 and FY23 budget proposes $50 million for VOCAA*
* Last year, CACs served more than 386,000 kids and trained 2.86 million individuals on prevention education
* Increased resources will help expand capacity to serve the *additional 250,000 kids that were likely abused but did not access a CAC*, continue to address the backlog of cases and additional pressures from COVID, and *assist the additional 600,000+ reported cases of cases of abuse needing a forensic interview that did not get one and the 7*5,000 *kids in these unserved counties may have been abused last year and went without access to services.*

***Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2022***

Sens. Coons/Blunt and Reps. Costa/Fitzpatrick/Wagner/Lesko have introduced the V*ictims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2022.* We urge members to cosponsor this critical reauthorization and work with their colleagues to get the bill to the president’s desk for his signature.

**Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) Reauthorization**

NCA has been working closely with the National Child Abuse Coalition, as well as House and Senate offices, on CAPTA Reauthorization, and the CAC needs in this bill:

* Increasing CAPTA funding
* Including CACs as an “eligible use” of these funds and highlighting that CACs are the models that states should be using when using MDTs
* Including provisions to provide immunity from civil and criminal liability for individuals making good faith reports of suspected abuse
* Including NCA/National Coalition to End Child Abuse Deaths pushed recommendations to better combat child abuse fatalities
* Including Jenna’s Law/Erin’s Law/child sexual abuse prevention education for the schools

**We support the bipartisan efforts to reauthorize and update CAPTA to better reflect the needs of the states/child welfare workforce, including significant increased funding.**

As CACs and advocates for all victims of child abuse, we look forward to working with you on this critical issue.