



Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association

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May 16, 2008

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
United States Senate
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley,

On behalf of the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association, I am writing to express our support for the Improved Adoption Incentives and Relative Guardianship Support Act of 2008. We find that this bill would benefit the families and children in Iowa.

Adoption Incentives Program Improvements – In the last few years, Iowa has not qualified for adoption incentives. When the incentives were available these incentives greatly assisted in supports for adoptive parents and in the recruitment and placement of children available for adoption. We all had many ideas on what we would like to accomplish with these incentive funds. These funds have greatly assisted in the reduction of waiting children and supports to the families who are parenting them. We strongly support the receipt of these funds.

De-Linking Title IV-E from Income Standards for Adoption Assistance –

We support de-linking Title IV-E from income standards for adoption assistance. The potential adoptive families need support in meeting the special needs of the children they want to adopt. This would help remove a barrier to permanency for these children.

Title IV-E Guardianship Support for Permanent Relative Caregivers – Iowa is doing a much better job of identifying relatives who would provide a home for children of family members. In order for many of the relatives to provide for the children, meet their special needs, and maintain connections, they are in need of financial assistance, post-adoptive services, and support. We all know that children who are able to remain in a relative home do much better in school, are able to maintain their important connections, and are not moved through the foster/adoptive system with multiple moves.

Thank you for your leadership in promoting positive policy for our nation's children and youth. We look forward to promoting this bill for passage this year.

Sincerely,

Lynhon Stout
Executive Director
Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association