

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 26, 2007

Support Children and Families Cosponsor the "Kinship Caregiver Support Act"

Dear Colleague:

This month marks the 10th anniversary of the *Adoption and Safe Families Act* (AFSA), a bipartisan effort by Congress that has helped thousands of foster children find permanent homes with loving adoptive families. Building on this landmark law, we urge you to cosponsor S.661, the *Kinship Caregiver Support Act*.

The *Kinship Caregiver Support Act* would enable thousands more foster children to leave foster care to join safe, loving families through federally supported legal guardianships. When a judge has determined that a child cannot safely be reunified with his birth family and when adoption is not possible, relative guardians may offer a way out of foster care and a chance for children to stay connected to siblings, relatives, culture, and community.

As evidenced by federal demonstration programs, children placed with relative foster families are as safe or safer as with non-relative foster families, change placements less often, are more likely to continue to attend the same school, and are more likely to be placed with siblings. The *Kinship Caregiver Support Act* would remove barriers to families for foster children living with in the care grandparents and other relatives by:

- Requiring notice to be given to relatives of children who enter foster care;
- Providing states the option to provide federal financial assistance to support foster children (who have been in care for longer than one year) when relatives who have been caring for them in foster care become their legal guardians.
- Establishing a Kinship Navigator Program to help relative caregivers navigate their way through available programs and services; and

The *Kinship Caregiver Support Act* has strong bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. We urge you to support foster children in finding the safe, permanent, loving families they deserve by co-sponsoring this important legislation. It is our hope that you will join us in this effort to support these families and children. Please contact Chelsea Maughan at 4-0400 in Senator Clinton's office or Amy Pellegrino at 4-8673 in Senator Snowe's office if you would like to become a cosponsor or have any questions.

Sincerely,



Hillary Rodham Clinton



Olympia J. Snowe