



November 10, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-329 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
H-148 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Goodlatte
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
B351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We the undersigned are the chief staff officers of organizations who support and provide services to America's youth – including mentoring programs, camps, afterschool programs, clubs, scouts, and more. We are writing to urge you to move the Child Protection Improvements Act (CPIA) H.R. 3902 swiftly through the House of Representatives. This bill has broad bipartisan support in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, and we fully expect it to pass once considered for a vote.

We appreciate your past support of this bill in the House. As you know, in 2010, CPIA was considered on the House floor and passed overwhelmingly (413-4, Roll Call no. 462). Unfortunately, the Senate did not act and the bill stalled. We cannot afford to delay further action. The longer we wait, the more children could be at risk. While the Congressional calendar after the recent midterm elections will be limited, with your support we are confident CPIA can pass the House again with broad bipartisan support. **To that end, we are specifically requesting you to commit to putting H.R. 3902 on the agenda for floor consideration before the end of the 113th Congress.**

As you know, organizations providing critical services to youth must be able to effectively, affordably, and reliably screen their volunteers and employees to ensure they do not have an inappropriate criminal past that might endanger the young people we seek to help. FBI fingerprint background checks are the most complete and reliable means of checking an individual's criminal record, and are the only type of background check that is truly available on

a nationwide basis. Unfortunately, the current background check system is not widely accessible for youth-serving organizations. All FBI requests must go through state agencies, but less than half of states allow a wide range of youth-serving organizations to access federal searches. Even in states where FBI searches are accessible, they are often prohibitively expensive and time-consuming.

We know from the PROTECT Act Child Safety Pilot that FBI searches provide information that is absolutely critical for screening youth-serving volunteers and employees. Results from the pilot showed that more than 6 percent of the nearly 69,000 volunteers screened with FBI searches had criminal records of concern — including extremely serious crimes like child sexual abuse, cruelty to children, and even murder. In addition, more than 41 percent of individuals with criminal records had crimes in states other than where they were applying to volunteer — meaning that only a nationwide check would have revealed these serious criminal offenses.

CPIA would build on the lessons learned through the Child Safety Pilot and finally solve this problem for youth-serving organizations of all kinds and in all states. The bill creates a streamlined and efficient way for youth-serving organizations to access FBI fingerprint checks at a reasonable cost with optimized turnaround time.

We are strong and passionate advocates of this bipartisan legislation and hope for swift movement through the House so it can finally be enacted into law! Thank you again for your support and leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

CC: Representative Mike Rogers (MI-08), sponsor H.R. 3902
Representative Adam Schiff (CA-28), sponsor H.R. 3902

David Shapiro
Chief Executive Officer
MENTOR: The National Mentoring
Partnership

Peg L. Smith
Chief Executive Officer
American Camp Association, Inc.

Normandie Nigh
Chief Executive Director
A World Fit for Kids!

Jodi Grant
Executive Director
Afterschool Alliance

W. Wilson Goode, Sr.
President and CEO
Amachi, Inc.

John Gomperts
President and CEO
America's Promise Alliance

Pam Iorio
Chief Executive Officer
Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America

James Clark
President and CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Steve Salem
President
Cal Rikpen, Sr. Foundation

Lucreda Cobbs
Senior Director Policy & Legislative Affairs
Catholic Charities USA

George L. Garrow, Jr.
Executive Director
Concerned Black Men National

Terri Sorensen
President
Friends of the Children

Anna Maria Chávez
Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of the USA

Judy Vredenburg
Chief Executive Officer
Girls, Inc.

Jennifer Sirangelo
President and CEO
National 4-H Council

John D. Ryan
President and CEO
National Center for Missing & Exploited
Children

Irv Katz
President and CEO
National Human Services Assembly

Kent Pakel
President and CEO
Search Institute

Joe Louis Barrow, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer
The First Tee

Wintley Phipps
CEO & Founder
U.S. Dream Academy

C. Diane Wallace Booker, Esq.
Executive Director
U.S. Dream Academy

Ed Foster-Simeon
President and CEO
U.S. Soccer Foundation

Neil Nicoll
President and CEO
YMCA of the USA