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July 16, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
 U.S. Senate  
 Committee on Health, Education, Labor,  
 and Pensions  
 Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-455  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
 U.S. Senate  
 Committee on Health, Education, Labor,  
 and Pensions  
 Russell Senate Office Building, SR-154  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

We join together to encourage the Committee to hold a hearing on the bipartisan *Poison Center Network Enhancement Act of 2018*, H.R. 5329, which was passed by the House on June 8, 2018 and sent to the Senate the next day. This legislation would reauthorize the Poison Center Program for an additional five years as well as extend the critical use of the toll-free Poison Help line (1-800-222-1222). We join with 36 coalitions in 26 states in support of H.R. 5329.

The network of 55 poison control centers provide our nation with free, 24/7 access to expert medical advice. The Poison Help toll-free lines receive approximately 3 million calls annually that cover substances, ranging from prescription and over-the-counter medications, cosmetics, e-cigarette liquid nicotine, to pesticides, and exposure to animal bites and stings. Young children make up more than half of the millions of exposures each year. Today its work is especially critical because of the opioid crisis and emerging risks, which is why it is vital that Congress reauthorize the law.

The mission of Safe Kids is to prevent unintentional childhood injuries, the leading cause of death for children in the United States. Poison centers help prevent these tragedies and are vital to parents as a critical public-private partnership of the U.S. health care system. When a poisoning occurs in the United States or its territories, having a single national toll-free number, 1-800-222-1222, ensures access to the remarkable shared expertise of our nation’s 55 poison control centers. In addition, they are cost effective, saving more than \$1.8 billion every year in medical costs and lost productivity. Tax dollars are saved every time a poison exposure is resolved by phone as opposed to expensive, Medicaid-funded emergency room visits.

Safe Kids Worldwide has long been an advocate for the poison control network as an indispensable part of the health care system. Please send H.R. 5329 to the floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

**Alabama**

Safe Kids Alabama

**Alaska**

Safe Kids Alaska

**California**

Safe Kids California

Safe Kids Central California

**Colorado**

Safe Kids Colorado

Safe Kids Colorado Springs

Safe Kids Denver Metro

**Florida**

Safe Kids Northeast Florida

Safe Kids Southwest Florida

**Illinois**

Safe Kids Illinois

Safe Kids Chicago

**Indiana**

Safe Kids Indiana

Safe Kids Bartholomew County

**Kansas**

Safe Kids Kansas

**Louisiana**

Safe Kids Louisiana

**Massachusetts**

Safe Kids Massachusetts

**Minnesota**

Safe Kids Minnesota

**Montana**

Safe Kids Missoula

**Nevada**

Safe Kids Clark County

**New Jersey**

Safe Kids New Jersey

**New Mexico**

Safe Kids New Mexico

**New York**

Safe Kids New York State

Safe Kids Nassau County

Safe Kids Queens

**North Carolina**

Safe Kids Guilford County

**North Dakota**

Safe Kids Grand Forks

Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead

**Ohio**

Safe Kids Ohio

Safe Kids Summit County

**Rhode Island**

Safe Kids Rhode Island

**South Carolina**

Safe Kids South Carolina

**Tennessee**

Safe Kids Tennessee

**Utah**

Safe Kids Utah

**Virginia**

Safe Kids Virginia

**Washington State**

Safe Kids Thurston County

**Wisconsin**

Safe Kids Wisconsin