



May 16, 2019

Honorable Robert Casey Jr.
U.S. Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable John Isakson
U.S. Senate
131 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Casey and Isakson:

We join together as 83 Safe Kids Worldwide coalitions from 35 states around the nation in strong support of your proposed bipartisan legislation, Scarlett's Sunshine Act, S1130. It provides the opportunity to significantly reduce the incidence of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC). There are few things more tragic than a parent needing to arrange the funeral of their infant.

The CDC reports that an average of 3,600 infants die suddenly and unexpectedly each year. In public health, evidence is the foundation for viable solutions and prevention efforts. We need to take the "unexpected" and "unexplained" out of infant sleep death. But the present state of SUIDs research is progressing slowly at best, largely because death reporting is inconsistent.

Mother and Dad Stephanie Zarecky and Ryan Pauley know this tragedy. They lost their 16-month-old daughter Scarlett Lillian Pauley in January 2017 in their Pittsburgh home. By then, Scarlett could say "Mama" and "Dada," but said Dada more often. Then, a day before Scarlett passed, she started repeating "Mama!" over and over again, "Mama. Mama." Stephanie says that was the greatest gift she ever received. On the evening of January 7, Scarlett had a mild cold and a slight fever. Her parents put her to bed and when Stephanie went to check on her, Scarlett was not breathing. Her mom's CPR and the work of EMTs could not revive her. To this day, they don't know what took Scarlett's life. Later, Stephanie told a blog, "in the case of SUDC and in particular of Scarlett, the answer is that there is no answer." The bill named after her daughter is intended to provide answers, and we join together to support it (more on Scarlett on page 3).

Provisions in Scarlett's Sunshine Act would help safe sleep advocates and educators, public health officials and medical practitioners prevent SUIDs deaths by standardizing data collection and death reviews. It would include new grants that would enable 100 percent review of all infant and child deaths as well as provide training and materials for death scene investigators. Better data would serve as a crucial springboard to develop smart solutions and spread awareness of best practices.

An evidence-based organization, Safe Kids Worldwide is a network of more than 420 dedicated coalitions working to prevent unintentional injury, including SUIDs and SUDC.

Senators Casey and Isakson, we thank you for your unwavering leadership in keeping our children safe. We look forward to working with you to pass Scarlett's Sunshine Act.

Sincerely,

Safe Kids Alabama
Safe Kids Alaska
Safe Kids Kenai Peninsula, Alaska
Safe Kids California
Safe Kids Sacramento, California
Safe Kids Central California
Safe Kids Orange County, California
Safe Kids Santa Barbara, California
Safe Kids Stanislaus, California
Safe Kids LA West, California
Safe Kids Santa Clara/San Mateo,
California
Safe Kids Inland Empire, California
Safe Kids Colorado
Safe Kids Colorado Springs, Colorado
Safe Kids Denver Metro, Colorado
Safe Kids Connecticut
Safe Kids DC
Safe Kids SW Florida
Safe Kids Northeast Florida
Safe Kids Volusia/Flagler Counties,
Florida
Safe Kids Seminole County, Florida
Safe Kids Georgia
Safe Kids Gainesville County, Georgia
Safe Kids Greater Augusta, Georgia
Safe Kids Lowndes, Georgia
Safe Kids Hawaii
Safe Kids Illinois
Safe Kids Chicago, Illinois
Safe Kids Indiana
Safe Kids Elkhart County, Indiana
Safe Kids Allen County, Indiana
Safe Kids Northwest Indiana
Safe Kids Indianapolis, Indiana
Safe Kids Kansas
Safe Kids Fayette County, Kentucky
Safe Kids Baltimore, Maryland
Safe Kids Massachusetts
Safe Kids West Michigan
Safe Kids Oakland County, Michigan
Safe Kids Minnesota

Safe Kids Mississippi
Safe Kids Grenada, Mississippi
Safe Kids Springfield, Missouri
Safe Kids St. Louis, Missouri
Safe Kids Missoula, Montana
Safe Kids Cascade County, Montana
Safe Kids New Hampshire
Safe Kids New Jersey
Safe Kids Middlesex County, New Jersey
Safe Kids New York
Safe Kids Nassau County, New York
Safe Kids Queens, New York
Safe Kids North Carolina
Safe Kids Guilford County,
North Carolina
Safe Kids Grand Forks, North Dakota
Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead,
North Dakota
Safe Kids Bismarck/Mandan,
North Dakota
Safe Kids Minot, North Dakota
Safe Kids Ohio
Safe Kids Greater Dayton, Ohio
Safe Kids Summit County, Ohio
Safe Kids Cincinnati, Ohio
Safe Kids Oklahoma
Safe Kids Tulsa, Oklahoma
Safe Kids Oregon
Safe Kids Southeastern Pennsylvania
Safe Kids Chester County, Pennsylvania
Safe Kids Allegheny County,
Pennsylvania
Safe Kids Rhode Island
Safe Kids South Carolina
Safe Kids Upstate, South Carolina
Safe Kids Tennessee
Safe Kids Dallas, Texas
Safe Kids El Paso, Texas
Safe Kids Virginia
Safe Kids Southwest Virginia
Safe Kids Benton-Franklin, Washington
Safe Kids Thurston County, Washington

Scarlett Lillian Pauley

As you learn about Scarlett's Sunshine Act, we wanted you to get to know the beautiful little girl behind it.

Scarlett Lillian Pauley was born on August 31st, 2015 at 11:25 am, perfect in every way. She lit up our world from the moment she entered it.

Scarlett's favorite toys were her pets, our two dogs and two cats, and books. Her favorite book was "Barnyard Dance" by Sandra Boynton. Her face would light up as her Mama would read to her with Scarlett on her lap, and her Dada would mimic the lines by doing a dance that matched each step.



Scarlett loved to smile. Many people knew her best for her "serious face," and most thought they got it because she didn't like them, but we knew she was just studying them. Before long she learned how much she loved to smile and make other people smile. Scarlett wasn't happy until she could get everyone around her smiling.

Scarlett also loved music. Her favorite song was "You are My Sunshine," which is the reason this legislation is named Scarlett's Sunshine Act.

On January 7th, 2017 Scarlett came down with a mild cold and had a slight fever. We gave her a bath and a final performance of "Barnyard Dance" and put her to sleep. A few hours later, her Mama went to check on her, and Scarlett was not breathing in her crib. Scarlett earned her angel wings on Sunday, January 8, 2017.

To this day, we do not know what took Scarlett from us. We agonized for five months and six days before we learned the results of her autopsy.

Scarlett's death is considered Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC). SUDC is a category of death in children between the ages of 1 and 18 that remains unexplained after a thorough investigation, including an autopsy. At this time, we do not know what causes SUDC, how to predict it or how to prevent it.

Losing a child is the single greatest pain we could ever imagine. And to be without answers as to why we lost her magnifies the tragedy exponentially. We read parenting books, followed all recommended safe sleep guidelines and made sure she received good medical care. And yet, we still lost our precious baby girl.

Since losing Scarlett, we have been blessed to have a second daughter, Eliana. Because we don't know what happened to Scarlett, we have no way of knowing that it will not happen to Eliana as well. We live every day in fear we will lose another child.

We believe SUDC is one of the most under-recognized medical tragedies of our time. Our society has done far too little for far too long, and we have to change that. Since losing Scarlett, in honor of her favorite song and the brightness she brought into our lives, we have tried every day to spread "Scarlett's Sunshine." We continue to strive to allow her memory to shine, as well as bring light to the medical mystery that took her from us.

Thank you for reading.

Stephanie and Ryan, Scarlett's parents