



April 29, 2019

Honorable Kamala Harris  
U.S. Senate  
112 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Joe Cunningham  
U.S. House of Representatives  
423 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Jesús Garcia  
U.S. House of Representatives  
530 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Harris, and Representatives Cunningham and Garcia:

We are a global, grass roots child safety organization and write in support of your legislation to require carbon monoxide detectors in federally assisted housing, S755 and HR1690. We are 40 coalitions of Safe Kids Worldwide joining together to support this important bill. Thank you for your leadership on matters relating to child safety.

Our mission is to prevent unintentional injury death involving kids 19 and under. Homes without carbon monoxide detectors lead to the poisoning deaths of kids is a tragic example of unintentional injury that we work on in our awareness programs and advocacy efforts.

We saw the new reports on NBC News about the children 3, 5 and 8 years old in Columbia, South Carolina who almost perished when CO penetrated the Allen Benedict Court public housing complex there.<sup>1</sup>

It is unconscionable that the law covering housing under the jurisdiction of the Department of Urban Housing and Development does not already require the capacity to detect CO. This is the case even though a CO detector can be purchased today on amazon.com for \$19.59.

Carbon monoxide is so pernicious because it is odorless, colorless and tasteless which is why it is known as "The Invisible Killer." Moreover, the first symptoms of CO poisoning mimic the symptoms of a flu which is why it often fools parents. The people who are vulnerable to CO poisoning are children and senior citizens and a majority of the 4.6 people in public housing are represented in those same populations.<sup>2</sup> Over 20,000 people per year are admitted to U.S. emergency rooms for unintentional CO poisoning.<sup>3</sup> An average of over 400 people die of unintentional CO poisoning per year.<sup>3</sup>

As a trusted, go-to resource for parents, we educate on how to prevent injury and advocate for smart public policy. Working together, we can do much more to make kids safer and healthier. We are here to help you advocate for passage of HR 1690 and S755.

Sincerely,

Safe Kids Alaska  
Safe Kids Greater Sacramento, California  
Safe Kids San Diego, California  
Safe Kids California  
Safe Kids Colorado  
Safe Kids Colorado Springs, Colorado  
Safe Kids Denver Metro, Colorado  
Safe Kids Connecticut  
Safe Kids District of Columbia  
Safe Kids Hawaii  
Safe Kids Illinois  
Safe Kids Chicago, Illinois  
Safe Kids South Chicagoland, Illinois  
Safe Kids Maine  
Safe Kids Minnesota  
Safe Kids Cascade County, Montana  
Safe Kids Missoula, Montana  
Safe Kids New Hampshire  
Safe Kids Middlesex, New Jersey  
Safe Kids New Jersey

Safe Kids New York City, Manhattan, Bronx,  
Brooklyn and Staten Island  
Safe Kids Nassau, New York  
Safe Kids Queens, New York  
Safe Kids New York  
Safe Kids Grand Forks, North Dakota  
Safe Kids Bismarck/Mandan, North Dakota  
Safe Kids Minot, North Dakota  
Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead  
Safe Kids Ohio  
Safe Kids Summit County, Ohio  
Safe Kids Mahoning Valley, Ohio  
Safe Kids Portland Metro, Oregon  
Safe Kids Southeastern Pennsylvania  
Safe Kids Upstate, South Carolina  
Safe Kids Virginia  
Safe Kids Thurston County, Washington  
Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin  
Safe Kids Wisconsin  
Safe Kids Worldwide

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<sup>1</sup> Khimm S, Strickler L, “Carbon monoxide is killing public housing residents, but HUD doesn't require detectors,” NBC News, March 1, 2019. Available at <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/carbon-monoxide-killing-public-housing-residents-hud-doesn-t-require-n977896>

<sup>2</sup> Mazzara A, Sard B. Chart Book: Employment and Earnings for Households Receiving Federal Rental Assistance, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 5, 2018. Available at: <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/chart-book-employment-and-earnings-for-households-receiving-federal-rental>

<sup>3</sup> Carbon Monoxide Poisoning, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/co/faqs.htm>