

March 27, 2013

Governor Steve Beshear  
700 Capital Avenue, Suite 100  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Governor Beshear,

We are writing to urge you to restore the recently announced cuts to the Kinship Care Program. The 2010 Census shows that Kentucky ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for the percent of relatives and kin caring for children.

- 63,000 extended families—grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other kin—step up to raise Kentucky children when their natural parents are unable to do so. This is 6 percent of all the Commonwealth’s children. Reasons leading to these kinship arrangements are many—parental death, military deployment, drug addiction, mental or physical illness, incarceration, child abuse or neglect, homelessness, and more.
- Approximately 632 of these arrangements are kinship foster care, 9 percent of all the children in foster care.

Kinship care represents the best of our values—families rich and poor, everywhere in this state, stepping up to take care of their own! [AARP GrandFacts](#) tells us that these kinship caregivers reflect exactly the state’s racial demographics: 87 percent are white, 10 percent are black, and 3 percent are Hispanic.

Most important, the Annie E. Casey’s most recent policy report ([Stepping Up for Kids](#), December 2012) reviews the extensive body of research studying kinship care alumni in comparison with alumni of traditional foster care, concluding that children and youth do so much better in kinship care, it should always be the first option considered for those who have experienced abuse or neglect.

Research shows that children who live in kinship care benefit from:

1. the sustained opportunity to build positive relationships with adult role models;
2. consistent educational experiences with minimal disruptions and frequent use of educational support services;
3. a positive sense of self that seems to come from the simple reality of permanence; and
4. significantly fewer serious mental health problems than peers who grow up in non-kin foster care.

In addition, kinship care even at the previous reimbursement rate is by far the least expensive form of out-of-home care. A kinship care subsidy for grandparents and other close relatives costs the state just \$300 a month, while payments to foster care parents costs around \$600 a month (a conservative

comparison that does not even account for the additional state costs for case workers or residential care).

We expect better as a state. Our families deserve better. Our children, Kentucky's future, deserve better. Budgets are about priorities. Research shows that kinship care is the most effective and least expensive way to prepare maltreated children and youth for adulthood.

We urge you to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the April 1 cuts to all children's programs, including the Kinship Care Program do not go into effect.

Sincerely,

**Organizations**

AARP Kentucky  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Baker & Company  
Boys and Girls Haven  
Brighton Center, Inc.  
Brooklawn  
Buckhorn Children and Family Services  
Burknet  
CASA of the River Region  
CASA Program of Hopkins County  
Children, Inc.  
Children's Alliance  
Children's Home of Northern Kentucky  
Community Coordinated Child Care (4C)  
Ecken & Smith PSC  
Family & Children's Place  
Family Resource Center Advisory Council  
Family Scholar House  
First Steps  
Gateway Children's Services  
Grandparents and Relatives as Parents [GAP] of the Bluegrass  
Holly Hill Children's Services  
Home of the Innocents  
Kenton County Detention Center  
Kentucky Council of Churches  
Kentucky Domestic Violence Association  
Kentucky Intensive Family Services  
Kentucky PTA  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth  
KVC Behavioral Healthcare Kentucky  
KY SAFE  
Lexington Senior Center  
Lifeskills, Inc. TFC  
Louisville's Race, Community and Child Welfare Initiative

Metro United Way  
National Association of Social Workers-Kentucky Chapter  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section  
Neighborhood House  
New Beginnings Family Services, Inc.  
New Pathways for Children  
Newport Intermediate School Family Resource Center  
Race Community and Child Welfare Initiative  
SAFY of Kentucky  
SAFY of Lexington  
SAFY of Somerset  
Spalding University  
Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth  
St. Joseph Children's Home  
St. Elizabeth Healthcare  
Sunrise Children's Services  
Teachers Are Special  
The Adanta Group  
The Center for Women and Families  
Transformations Impact Plus  
Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph  
Uspiritus  
Women's Leadership Conference for Religious Freedom

### **Individuals**

Kathy Adams	Neil Blumberg	Zenith Camper
Lydia Akin	Amber Boyd	Jerry Cantrell
Kathy Allen	Joyce Branscum	Terry W. Carl
Brittany Arthur	Robert Brauner	Dana Carrera
Peggy Arvin	Ron Bridges	Amanda Caseman
Alma Austin	Mary Brock	Dondra Collins
Bill Bagley	Larry Brock	Randy Coy
Charles L. Baker	Alicia Jackson Brown	Marchelle Crawford
Jim Ballard	Dianna Brown	Danelle Coomer,CSW
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Lee Baltzell	Chiyonne Bruce	Freddie R. Davis
Leeanne Barton	Richard Bruggman	Kari Dazey
Evan Bassett	Kenneta Matthews Brumley	Cathy Decker
Stephanie Beard	Teresa Buechele	Helen Deines
Penny Beighey	Terrie Burgan	Diane Deitel
Theresa Berryman	Don Burk	Dolores Delahanty
Jason Beyer	Christopher Burkhead	Judith C Dendy
Jennifer Blair	Glen Burse	Mary Jo Dendy
Vernee Blancett	Delora Byrd	Sister Paulanne Diebold, RSM
Tami Blevins	Shannon Cambron	Nathan Diekmann

Erica Dishman  
Veronica Dishman  
Cristie Dishman  
Steven Dye  
Lynn Eastman  
Marilyn Elam  
Michelle Elisburg  
Anne Ely  
Jane Emke  
Sarah Falin  
Steven Farr  
Liz Ferguson  
Nancye Fields  
Jr Fields  
Robin Fletcher  
Sandra Flynn  
Lina Fong  
Shawn Ford  
Sandi Friedson  
Malinda Gabbard  
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David Girdler, Sr.  
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Josette Gocella  
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Joe Gomes  
Shannon Gordon  
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Raegan Gyorffy, MSW, CSW  
Mr. Rodney Hadley  
Beverly Hargis  
Lisa Harris  
Anthony Helton  
Roberta Hershberg  
Amber Hettrick  
Marie Hicks  
Ashley Hines  
Mary Hodge  
Jennifer Curry Hoertz  
Desirae Holloway  
Alexandria Hoover  
Tracie Horton  
Rick Hulefeld  
Pam Hunter

Mary Joann & Keith Hutchins  
Linda Ince  
Ron Jackson  
Jacob Jessie  
Dustin Johnson  
Melissa Jones  
JoAnn Kalb  
Meryl Kasdan  
Shirley Katz  
Adam Kern  
Lisa Klein  
Gina Klyachkin  
Seth Krusich  
Carolyn Land  
Beth Lange  
Jan Lavy  
Nicole Lavy-Joy  
Phyllis Leibson  
Penny Lentz  
Sonia Levine  
Dan Luchtefeld  
Janet K Lumppp  
Daphyne Maddox  
Mary Mahanes  
Shannon Major  
Beverly Malone  
Bridgett Marbre  
Dory Marken  
Mary Ellen Massey  
Traci Mathieu  
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Hannah Mccuiston  
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Jennifer Moody  
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Kathy Rodgers  
Sheri Roth  
Theron Rowe  
Sherry Roy-Hunton  
Kathy Runyon  
Dotti Russell  
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Barbara G. Sanders  
Natasha Sanford  
Carol Savkovich  
Stephen J Sedita  
Scott Seligman  
Terri Seltz  
Sheila Shankle  
Ellen Shapira  
Sr. Grace Simpson, OSU  
Michelle Sisler  
Toni Skaggs  
Wes Slaven  
Amy L. Smith  
Joyce Smith  
Geneva Sneed  
Eula Somerville

Amy Eady Spears  
Stephanie Spradlin  
Samantha Stephenson  
Julie Strull  
Casey Sweet  
Susie Sykes  
Marian M. Taylor  
Billy Temple  
Joan Temple  
Patricia Tennen  
Jamie Testa  
Stella G. Thompson  
Holly M. Titus  
Anita Toepfert  
Joe Tolan  
Danielle Tosti  
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LaTasha Walters  
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Kristy Watt  
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Tammy Weidinger  
Robin Weiss  
Jean Wells  
Mary Wethington  
Jim Whaley  
Anne Marie Whelan  
Colleen White  
Jordan Wildermuth  
Shianne Williams  
Desaray Wilson  
Regina Winburn  
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Kathy Wright  
Nichole Yarbrough  
Kenneth Zegart  
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