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June 24, 2003

The Honorable C.W. Young
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-218, The Capital
Washington, DC 20515-6015

The Honorable David R. Obey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6015

Dear Chairman Young and Representative Obey:

The American Bar Association appreciates your past efforts to assist the hundreds of thousands of abused and neglected children, the 130,000 children in foster care waiting for adoptive families, and the estimated 20,000 young people aging out of foster care each year. Now we ask you to take further steps on their behalf.

We ask you to include in the FY 2004 Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education appropriations bill President Bush's request of \$200 million for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program and \$60 million for the Educational and Training Vouchers for youths who age out of foster care.

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program offers flexible funding to states for a range of community-based family-centered services to keep children safe and in permanent families. The Educational and Training Vouchers help older youths leaving foster care to move toward self-sufficiency. The Subcommittee did not approve the Administration's request for these key supports for children who have been abused and neglected, but we hope you will recognize the importance of these investments and include them in the FY 2004 bill.

We all are fully aware of the tough economic challenges facing this country. In fact, the fiscal crisis facing states makes it especially critical that we increase needed support for vulnerable children, youth and families at this time. We hope that we can count on your support.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Evans

cc: Members of the Committee

