



National Child Support Enforcement Association

Voice for the child support community.
444 North Capitol Street, Suite 414
Washington, DC 20001

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 2, 2005

CONTACT:

Kay Cullen
202-626-5266

National Child Support Enforcement Association Urges Conference Committee To Eliminate Child Support Funding Cuts in Budget Reconciliation Bill

Washington, DC—Child support enforcement services depended on by 16 million families are in jeopardy if the Conference Committee does not eliminate funding cuts in the U.S. House of Representatives' proposed budget reconciliation package" according to Vernon Drew, President of the National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA). "Children and families in this nation stand to lose far more than the government will save. The Senate opposed reduced federal funding to the child support program and we urge the Conference Committee to support the Senate's position," said Drew. NCSEA, in partnership with the National Council of Child Support Directors (NCCSD), the Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association (ERICSA), the Western Interstate Child Support Enforcement Council, state and local child support organizations and national advocacy organizations urges the Conference Committee to eliminate child support funding cuts in the Budget Reconciliation Bill.

The legislation (H.R. 4241) would reduce the federal financial participation (FFP) level from 66% to 50% by 2010. It would also repeal the long-standing authority allowing states to use their performance incentive payments as part of the state match for drawing down federal funds. These funds are required by law to be reinvested in the child support program. These two funding cuts will devastate the child support program in all U.S. states, tribes, territories and the District of Columbia by restricting the ability of child support professionals, prosecutors, law enforcement agents, judges and court officials to provide services to children and families. The bill would also impose a \$25 annual fee on cases where states collect \$500 or more annually for customers who have never received public welfare benefits.

In essence, the proposed cuts:

- Jeopardize the child support enforcement services received by 16 million families;
- Harm the child support programs' recognized effective performance and cost effectiveness;
- Reduce the amount of collections that states pay to the federal government to reimburse TANF grants; and,
- Increase local, state and federal government spending in Medicaid, TANF, Food Stamps and other means-tested social services programs.

Investing in the nation's child support program is wise considering the program returned \$4.38 in child support collections for every \$1 spent," said Drew. In FY 2004, child support programs across the nation collected more than \$21 billion, a 75% increase over FY 1996 when welfare reform was enacted. Ninety percent (90%) of these collections have gone to families ensuring that they remain self-sufficient. The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recognized the effectiveness of the child support program, rating it the highest performing social services program and recommending a 5% funding increase for FY 2004. Reducing funding will undermine the dramatic improvements in the program and send the message that high performance will be sanctioned, not rewarded.

###

National Child Support Enforcement Association

Voice for the child support community.

The National Child Support Enforcement Association is a non-profit organization representing over 60,000 child support professionals, judges, agencies and public and private strategic partners providing services to over 16 million families and children served by the nation's child support enforcement program.