



The Honorable Mark Souder  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2231 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Federal Youth Coordination Act of 2008**

Dear Representative Souder:

We, the undersigned, are writing to request your support for the Federal Youth Coordination Act of 2008 (H.R. 7004), which creates a White House Office on Children and Youth.

As Indiana's only Representative on the Education & Labor Committee, you have the unique opportunity to be a champion for the youth of our state by giving this bill full consideration and ensuring its passage through committee and onto the floor of the House; as a committee member or an original co-sponsor.

**The Dilemma**

Far too few of the nation's young people are ready for college, work and life. Indiana's young people are no exception. The Federal government runs hundreds of programs to serve children and youth ages 0-24, spread across 12 departments and agencies. The vast majority of these efforts are essential and effective; however, they are not part of an integrated, strategic plan. The result is wasted resources as well as gaps in service that prevent many young people from achieving successful adulthood.

**The Solution**

The proposed White House Office on Children and Youth would strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of youth programs and services by:

- o Coordinating leadership and vision across departments and agencies;
- o Developing and overseeing interagency implementation of a National Youth Strategy, which would determine the outcomes our nation wants for its youth and the reforms necessary to achieve those results; and
- o Providing young people a voice in the policies that impact them directly.

**Domestic and International Models**

The State Children's Cabinets and Councils Network reports that 24 states have established cross-agency coordinating bodies that are systematically changing the fragmented and ineffective way policies and programs serve children and youth by coordinating services, developing a common set of outcomes, and collaboratively developing and implementing plans to foster the well-being of young people. The same principle can and has worked at the local level in communities across the country and at the federal level in nations around the world. **Currently, Indiana does not have such a body, but H.R. 7004 also seeks to provide start-up funding to states that wish to create one.**

As you know, federal efforts to coordinate youth policy have Congressional support. In 2005, the House of Representatives passed the Federal Youth Coordination Act (H.R. 856) by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 353 to 62. Unfortunately, no funds were appropriated and the creation of the Office was put on hold. With your help, this can be the year our federal government proves its commitment to young people – and the future of this nation.

We thank you for your public service and your commitment to the young people of the Hoosier state. Establishing a White House Office on Children and Youth will elevate the work that you and we are doing on behalf of youth to the status it deserves.

~

**This letter urging the creation of the White House Office on Children & Youth is signed by 38 businesses, community organizations, congregations and government agencies, and 109 individuals from across the state of Indiana.** Please contact Amelia Miller at MCCOY with any questions, (317) 921-1229 or [amelia.miller@mccoyouth.org](mailto:amelia.miller@mccoyouth.org). This letter has also been sent by mail to the Representative's Fort Wayne and Washington offices.

## ORGANIZATIONS

### **Bloomington:**

Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County

### **Fishers:**

DownButNotOut Communications

### **Fort Wayne:**

Allen County Public Library

### **Indianapolis:**

Adult and Child Center

Art With a Heart

AYS Inc.

Brookside Community Church of Indianapolis

Center United Methodist Church

Children's Coalition of Indiana

Choices, Inc.

Circle City Frontiers Club Inc.

Clarian Health, Healthy Families

Concord Neighborhood Center

DVN

EmberWood Center

Families Reaching For Rainbows, Inc

Hamilton Centers Youth Service Bureau, Inc.

Hoover Family Foundation

Indiana Minority Health Coalition

Indiana Youth Services Association

Indianapolis Metropolitan High School

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center

Inquisitive Kids, Inc.

Jewish Community Center Indianapolis

Lifeway For Youth

Marion County Commission on Youth

National Junior Tennis League of Indianapolis

Northside New Era Community Outreach Corporation

Project Concern Indianapolis, Inc.

Save The Youth

St. John's Community Care, Inc.

Starfish Initiative

The Growing Community

The Latino Youth Collective of Indiana, Inc.

Transitional Assistance Services, Inc.

West Morris Street Free Methodist Church

Wisdom & Associates

Youth as Resources of Central Indiana

### **Martinsville:**

Ray Hoskins and Associates

## INDIVIDUALS

### **Beech Grove:**

David Lannan, Deacon, Speedway General Baptist Church

*"If we do not take care of our children today, there is a good chance they will be tomorrow's criminal or homeless generation - statistics. Let's show the youth they are important to the future of this nation."*

### **Bloomington:**

Ron Thompson, Executive Director, Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County

*"Congressman Souder: Our nation lags behind other industrialized countries in youth development and leads most in child maltreatment. We must focus attention and resources to rectify this problem if we expect to be competitive in the 21st Century and beyond. Thank you for your service to our nation."*

### **Brownsburg:**

Solomon Knight, Program Director, D.R.E.A.M. Alive, Inc.

### **Carmel:**

TiGre McNear, Department Manager, Nordstrom

Debbie Zipes, Associate Director, Indiana Afterschool Network

### **Danville:**

Dianne Murer, Program Coordinator - Hendricks County, Youth as Resources

### **Evansville:**

Parri Black, President & CEO, Youth First, Inc.

### **Fishers:**

Amanda Cooley, COO, C&S Consulting, LLC

David Barrett, Partner, Baker & Daniels

Alphonso Bailey, Executive Director, DownButNotOut Communications

### **Fort Wayne:**

Jennifer McKinney, Children's Librarian II, Allen County Public Library

*"The last White House Conference for Children and Youth was under Nixon. Please help us help youth!"*

### **Greenwood:**

Thomas Stucky, Professor, Indiana University Purdue University- Indianapolis

### **Indianapolis:**

Byron Alston, CEO, Save The Youth

Karina Anderson, Youth Coordinator, Fay Biccard Glick Neighborhood Center at Crooked Creek

Craig Andler, President & Executive Director, Families Reaching For Rainbows, Inc.

Alan Archibald, Director, The Growing Community

Sandra Biven, Educator, Marion County Health Department

Mary Boggs, President, Children's Coalition of Indiana

*"As president of The Children's Coalition of Indiana, I am writing to urge you to support this legislation. We advocate for the youth of Indiana at the Statehouse and have long sensed the need for an integrated strategy to help our young people lead more productive lives. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration."*

Jim Boyd, Education & Youth Development Coordinator, Indianapolis Urban League

Sharon Brandon, Household Manager & Mother

John Byers, Vice President - Youth Programming, Indiana Sports Corporation

Nancy Carr, Executive Director, National Junior Tennis League of Indianapolis

Christopher Collins, Community Initiatives Coordinator, Marion County Commission on Youth

Carol Conrad, Executive Director, Art With a Heart

Mary Crevey, James Whitcomb Riley Memorial Association

Kerri Davis, Assistant Service Learning Coordinator, Learn and Serve Indiana

Laura Davis, Family Resource Specialist, Healthy Families

Kathryn Delacruz, Student & Board Member, IUPUI - Marion County Commission On Youth

Kirsten Eamon-Shine, Community Initiatives Coordinator, Marion County Commission on Youth

*"Thanks for providing our community with the chance to support better, more effective programming for youth!"*

Leigh Evans, Vice President, Indiana Youth Services Association

*"Indiana Youth Services Association - a non-profit, statewide association of youth service bureaus is committed to youth advocacy and community education. Please contact us to discuss this important issue. "INvesting in the future of Hoosier Youth" 317-238-6955"*

Casey Foust, Home and School Advisor, Wayne Township- Stout Field Elementary

Andrea Freund, Program Director, AYS

Kathy Gehlhausen, Mental Health and Addictions Therapist, Gallahue Community Mental Health Center

Jill Gordon, Youth Volunteer Coordinator, The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

Jimmy Graves, Director of Scholar Services, Starfish Initiative

*"I believe our efforts need to be united, it is critical."*

Bridget Gross, Assistant, Indiana State Senate

Claudia Guerin, 4-H/Youth Development Educator, Purdue University Extension-Marion County

Sharon Hampton, Project Director, Project Concern Indianapolis, Inc.

Leslie Hankins, Assistant Director of Resource Development, AYS, Inc.

Trevor Holloway, Student & Board Member, North Central High School - Marion County Commission on Youth

David Hoover, Executive Director, Hoover Family Foundation

Megan Howey Hughes, Elementary Teacher, The Indianapolis Project School

Benjamin Hunter, Councilor, Indianapolis City/County Council

Cynthia Jackson, Behavioral Specialist and Teacher, Indianapolis Public Schools

Michael Jaffe, Supervisor, Midwest Psychological Center

Nancy Jewell, President & CEO, Indiana Minority Health Coalition

Jamie Johnson, Chief Creative Officer, Inquisitive Kids, Inc.

Joyce Johnson, Executive Director, Starfish Initiative

Nicolette Jones, Youth Services Manager, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana, Inc.

Benjamin Jones, Job Developer, John H. Boner Community Center

Gwen Kelley, Educational Consultant,  
Dawning Horizons Educational Services

*"Please support this measure. Having just served on the Indiana Disproportionality committee for Youth Services related to Mental Health, Child Welfare, Education and Juvenile Justice, there was great concern about the need for a statewide coordination of services. There is a need for cross data access, program coordination and cross-agency planning. The biggest hinderance to this happening would be funding. Federal funds would be a great benefit to our state to help alleviate these concerns."*

Kerri Leffler, Team Leader, Adult and Child Center

Mary Leffler, Division Director of Community Engagement, Volunteers of America of Indiana

Linda Lipscomb, President & CEO,  
Transitional Assistance Services, Inc.

Karen Lyles, Senior Manager of Programs & Administration, Center for Leadership Development

Stephanie Lyons, Executive Director,  
Hamilton Centers Youth Service Bureau, Inc.

Anne Majewski, Lutheran Child & Family Services

Julie Marsh, CEO, DVN

Joe Martinez, Director of Grant Development & Management, YMCA of Greater Indianapolis

Brent Matthews, Chief Operating Officer,  
Choices, Inc.

Natalie Mazanowski, Communications Director, Marion County Commission on Youth

Nita McCormick, Member Services Coordinator, Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center

Pamela McGinley, Office Manager - Funding Intake, AYS Inc.

Janet McIntyre, Director - TA Center, Choices, Inc.

Jason Melchi, MSW Grad Student, IUPUI

Amelia Miller, Community Initiatives Associate, Marion County Commission On Youth

Leslie Montgomery, Director of Programs,  
Planned Parenthood of Indiana

*"We need to give the youth of our nation every opportunity to grow into the leaders that will one day lead this nation."*

Richard Myers, Publisher, Times-Leader Publications, LLC

*"Absolutely!"*

Gary Nelson, Program Director, Indiana Youth Group

April Nelson, Area Manager- Early Childhood/Northwest Hendricks, AYS, Inc.

Georgia O'Connor, Youth Pastor, West Morris Street Free Methodist Church

Becky Phillips, Assistant Manager - Camp Riley, Riley Children's Foundation

Brant Ping, Director, Child and Adolescent Placement Project Agency

Nick Reich, Director of Student & Family Services, Indianapolis Metropolitan High School

Raymond Riddle, Match Support Specialist, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Indiana

Paula Rivera, Director, Ebenezer Retreat & Camping Institute

Tariq Robinson, Coordinator of Multi-Age Programs, Indianapolis Museum of Art

Lynn Rogers, Director of Children & Youth Services, Concord Neighborhood Center

Jose R. Rosario, Professor of Education, Indiana University

Eileen Ryan, Center United Methodist Church

Janna Schmidt, Home Based Supervisor, Dockside Services

Michael Schrettenbrunner, Social Work Graduate Student, IUPUI

Aaron Shelby, Reverend, Brookside  
Community Church of Indianapolis

Paula Shepley, Director, Youth as Resources of  
Central Indiana

Benjamin Shine, Marketing and Development  
Coordinator, Second Helpings, Inc

Brian Shivers, Director of Youth and Young  
Adult Ministries, Second Presbyterian Church

Amanda Slaten, Team Leader, EmberWood  
Center

Larry Smith, Associate Director, IU Center on  
Philanthropy

Brian Smith, Intake Worker, Head Start  
Family Development Services

Katherine Souchet-Moura, Board Member,  
The Latino Youth Collective of Indiana, Inc.

Damon Spight, Education Specialist, National  
FFA Organization

Sabrina Stennette, Human Resources, Rolls-  
Royce

Simona Stoica, Program Assistant, Making  
Connections Indianapolis

Ronald Swann, Onmi Coordinator, St. John's  
Community Care, Inc.

*"I do support the concept that will provide  
additional services for the youth in the  
community to foster a positive self concept."*

Mitchell Swedarsky, Attorney, MCPDA

Susan Switzer, Retired Educator, Indiana PTA

Amy Thacker, Office Coordinator, Adult and  
Child

Frances VanMaaren, Administration -  
Professional Training, AYS Inc.

Janet Wakefield, CEO, The Journey

*"Please consider everything you do with an  
eye for our future generation. Thanks, Janet"*

David Waldman, Director of Teen and  
Outreach, Jewish Community Center  
Indianapolis

Irvin Walker, Director, Youths Speak

Robert Walls, District Director for Youth  
Programs, Circle City Frontiers Club Inc.

Frank Watson, Administrative Assistant,  
Marion County Community Corrections

*"Let's do this, find what works and get the  
kids some help."*

Lydia Williams, Supervisor, Clarian Health,  
Healthy Families

Dolores Wisdom, President, Wisdom &  
Associates

Jeff Wittman, State Director, Lifeway For  
Youth

Marie Wright, Program Director, Northside  
New Era Community Outreach Corporation

**La Porte:**

Christine Wedam Rosario, Retired

**Martinsville:**

Ray Hoskins, Owner, Ray Hoskins and  
Associates

*"This is a really good idea."*