



July 16, 2009

The Honorable Frank Lautenberg  
United States Senate  
324 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lautenberg:

On behalf of Safe Kids USA, I write to express our support for S. 1445, the *Stillbirth and SUID Prevention, Education, and Awareness Act of 2009*, legislation to improve investigation and review of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) incidents, establish a national SUID and SUDC database, and raise public awareness of known risk factors for SUID and SUDC. This legislation is critical, as more than 4,500 infants die suddenly and unexpectedly from no obvious cause each year. In fact, SIDS, a type of SUID, is the leading cause of death among infants ages 1-12 months and is the third leading cause overall of infant deaths in the United States.

If enacted, S. 1445 would encourage comprehensive death scene investigation and help states develop or expand child death review programs. Some of our Safe Kids coalition coordinators are members of child death review teams in their states and inconsistencies in the investigation and review process among states have been an area of concern to Safe Kids for some time. We need comprehensive investigation and accurate and uniform classification of SUID and SUDC deaths in order to better understand why these incidents occur and help prevent them from happening in the future. S. 1445 also establishes a national registry to collect, analyze and disseminate the information gleaned from these investigations.

Moreover, the legislation would establish a national public awareness and education campaign to educate parents and caregivers about known risk factors for SUID and SUDC. Safe Kids supports efforts to educate parents about all aspects of safe sleep environments, including laying babies on their backs, removing soft objects from cribs, and checking to ensure cribs and bassinets have not been recalled due to safety risks. By intent, design, practice, and custom, children are left unattended in cribs and bassinets for extended periods of time. These should be the safest places in the home and, yet, many parents are unaware of basic sleep safety tips.

We strongly support passage of S. 1445 and we look forward to working with your office to move this legislation forward. If Safe Kids can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 662-4463 or Stephanie A. Russell, Public Policy Associate, at (202) 662-0608. Thank you for your leadership on this important safety initiative.

Sincerely,

Alan Korn  
Executive Director