Ohio Adoption Planning Group

A Public/Private Agency Collaboration Supporting Best Pratices in Adoption and Permanency Throughout Ohio

To: House and Senate Members of the 129th General Assembly
From: The Ohio Adoption Planning Group and Supporting Organizations
Date: November 15, 2011

Re: Renewed and Stable Investment in Adoptions

Each November, Ohio celebrates National Adoption Awareness Month to honor adoptive families, their children, and efforts underway to promote adoption of Ohio foster children. While we appreciate the General Assembly partially restoring (from cuts initially proposed), in the SFY 2012-2013 budget, funds for adoptive and kinship families and independent living supports for foster youth transitioning to adulthood, there is work that remains.

The Ohio Adoption Planning Group strongly urges Ohio leaders and policy makers to commit to a renewed and stable investment in adoption so every child has a permanent family, preventing children from aging out of foster care without critical family connections.

Nearly 3,000 Ohio foster children are waiting to be adopted. These children are in the custody of Ohio's child protection system and rely on us to find them permanent homes. Each year, more than 1,000 children "age out" of the foster care system at age 18.

The state's investment in adoption subsidies for special needs children has returned to 1986 levels – an all time low from 25 years ago!

On behalf of Ohio's waiting children, adoptive families, and all of the many public and private agencies contributing to safe and permanent homes for Ohio's children, we encourage you to renew your commitment to Ohio's waiting children. Every child is adoptable – no matter their age, cultural background, or challenges. Every child deserves a permanent family connection.

Enclosed with this letter is a keepsake bookmark and brief profiles of eight Ohio youth waiting for adoption. We will update you periodically on the journey these youth take to finding/connecting with their very own forever families.

If you have questions or would like additional information, feel free to contact PCSAO 614-224-5802, OACCA 614-461-0041, or any of the sponsoring organizations shown below.

With sincere regards,
The Ohio Adoption Planning Group

Sponsors of Ohio's 3rd Annual Adoption Advocacy Day

PCSAO Public Children Services Association of Ohio
Dave Thomas Foundation For Adoption – Finding Forever Families for Children in Foster Care
Athens County Children Services
Summit County Children Services – Building Families . . . Building Futures
UMCH Family Services – a ministry of the United Methodist Church
Ohio Adoption Planning Group
OACCA – Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies, Inc.
The Village Network – Creating Positive Change for Responsible Living
Ohio's Resource Families – adoptive, foster, kinship, respite
Caring for Kids, Inc.
Adoption Network – Adoption is a lifelong journey
Capital University Law School – National Center for Adoption Law & Policy
NEOARE – North East Ohio Adoption Resource Exchange
IHS Institute for Human Services
Pathway – Caring for Children
Adoption Circle
Tuscarawas County Department of Job & Family Services
Guernsey County Children Services – Safely Home