



**AMERICAN
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CARDIOLOGY**

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*The mission of the American College
of Cardiology and the American
College of Cardiology Foundation
is to transform cardiovascular care
and improve heart health.*

August 15, 2018

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Barton
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kathy Castor
2052 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Grassley, Senator Bennet, Representative Barton and Representative Castor:

On behalf of the American College of Cardiology (ACC), we are writing to express our support for S. 428/H.R. 3325, the Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act of 2017 (ACE Kids Act). Thank you for introducing this legislation to improve care for children with complex medical conditions.

The ACC is a 52,000-member medical society that is the professional home for the entire cardiovascular care team. The College's mission is to transform cardiovascular care and improve heart health. The ACC leads in health policy formation, standards and guidelines. The College operates national registries to measure and improve care, provides professional medical education, promotes cardiovascular research and bestows credentials on cardiovascular specialists who meet stringent qualifications.

The ACE Kids Act would improve care coordination for children with medical complexities on Medicaid, especially in instances when they would need to visit multiple providers across state lines. Specially-designed health homes would employ national quality standards and coordinate care, and include the full range of acute, post-acute and primary care providers, as well as behavioral health professionals. This legislation clarifies that the program would be voluntary for states, providers, and families, and work within the existing structure of a state's Medicaid program, including those states with Medicaid managed care. It would also enable the gathering of national level data on rare, complex conditions to determine best practices. These are laudable goals that aim to help our most vulnerable patients, and are in complete alignment with ACC's mission.

Of the more than 30 million children covered by Medicaid, two million have complex medical conditions such as cancer or congenital heart defects. Congenital heart disease (CHD), a life-long consequence of a structural abnormality of the heart present at birth, is the number one birth defect in the nation. CHDs affect nearly 1% of—or about 40,000—births per year in the United States. While the diagnosis and treatment of CHD has greatly improved over the years, most patients with complex heart defects need special care throughout their lives. CHD patients would benefit from the array of outpatient and community services provided by the ACE Kids Act.

The ACC commends you for your leadership in addressing the needs of medically complex children. We look forward to working with you to advance this crucial legislation.

Sincerely,

C. Michael Valentine, MD, FACC
President, American College of Cardiology