

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6070

To enhance Federal efforts focused on increasing public awareness of the risks and dangers associated with Shaken Baby Syndrome.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2006

Mrs. KELLY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To enhance Federal efforts focused on increasing public awareness of the risks and dangers associated with Shaken Baby Syndrome.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Shaken Baby Syn-
5 drome Prevention Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

8 (1) There are unfortunately many incidents
9 that exemplify the abuse that children suffer across
10 all 50 states—becoming victims of Shaken Baby

1 Syndrome. One such incident involves 8-month-old
2 Cynthia Gibbs, of Yonkers, New York, who on No-
3 vember 17, 2000, died of massive brain damage.
4 Cynthia’s abuser and killer was her own State-cer-
5 tified child care provider operating child care serv-
6 ices out of her home. Another involves 11-month-old
7 George “Skipper” Lithco of Poughkeepsie, New
8 York, who died on December 3, 2000, from brain in-
9 juries he suffered when he was shaken by his day
10 care provider—a 51-year-old grandmother who said
11 she lost control when he spit up on her and cried
12 during his afternoon feeding.

13 (2) The most recent National Child Abuse and
14 Neglect Data System figures reveal that almost
15 900,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect
16 in the United States in 2002, causing unspeakable
17 pain and suffering to our most vulnerable citizens.

18 (3) Among the children who are victims of
19 abuse and neglect, nearly 4 children die in the
20 United States each day.

21 (4) Children aged 1 year or younger accounted
22 for 41.2 percent of all child abuse and neglect fatali-
23 ties in 2002, and children aged 4 years or younger
24 accounted for 76.1 percent of all child abuse and ne-
25 glect fatalities in 2002.

1 (5) Abusive head trauma, including the trauma
2 known as “Shaken Baby Syndrome”, is recognized
3 as the leading cause of death of physically abused
4 children.

5 (6) Shaken Baby Syndrome can result in loss of
6 vision, brain damage, paralysis, seizures, or death.

7 (7) A 2003 report in the Journal of the Amer-
8 ican Medical Association estimated that, in the
9 United States, an average of 300 children will die
10 each year, and 600 to 1,200 more will be injured,
11 of whom 2/3 will be babies or infants under 1 year
12 in age, as a result of Shaken Baby Syndrome, with
13 many cases resulting in severe and permanent dis-
14 abilities.

15 (8) Medical professionals believe that thousands
16 of additional cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome are
17 being misdiagnosed or are not detected.

18 (9) Shaken Baby Syndrome often results in
19 permanent, irreparable brain damage or death to an
20 infant and may result in more than \$1,000,000 in
21 medical costs to care for a single, disabled child in
22 just the first few years of life.

23 (10) The most effective solution for ending
24 Shaken Baby Syndrome is to prevent the abuse, and
25 it is clear that the minimal costs of education and

1 prevention programs may prevent enormous medical
2 and disability costs and immeasurable amounts of
3 grief for many families.

4 (11) Prevention programs have demonstrated
5 that educating new parents about the danger of
6 shaking young children and how they can help pro-
7 tect their child from injury can bring about a signifi-
8 cant reduction in the number of cases of Shaken
9 Baby Syndrome. This is further evidenced in work
10 completed by the Upstate New York SBS Prevention
11 Project, which resulted in a 47 percent reduction in
12 the number of shaking and subsequent inflicted head
13 injuries in the Buffalo, New York, region.

14 (12) Education programs have been shown to
15 raise awareness and provide critically important in-
16 formation about Shaken Baby Syndrome to parents,
17 care givers, daycare workers, child protection em-
18 ployees, law enforcement personnel, health care pro-
19 fessionals, and legal representatives.

20 (13) Efforts to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome
21 are supported by organizations across the United
22 States whose mission it is to make aware, educate,
23 and support the general public and professionals
24 about Shaken Baby Syndrome, as well as increase
25 support for victims and the families of victims.

1 **SEC. 3. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
3 Human Services shall develop and implement an effective
4 ongoing public information and educational campaign to
5 inform the public, in general, and new parents, child care
6 providers, and other care givers of young children, in par-
7 ticular, about brain injuries and other harmful effects that
8 may result from shaking infants and children under 5
9 years of age and healthy strategies to cope with a crying
10 baby and related frustrations—all to help protect children
11 from injury.

12 (b) ELEMENTS.—The program under subsection (a)
13 shall include at least the following elements:

14 (1) Educational and informational materials in
15 print, audio, video, electronic and other media which
16 should be coordinated with national and Federal
17 awareness activities, such as Shaken Baby Aware-
18 ness Week, to the extent possible.

19 (2) Public service announcements and adver-
20 tisements.

21 (3) Dissemination of effective prevention prac-
22 tices and techniques to parents and care givers, and
23 to maternity hospitals, child care centers, organiza-
24 tions providing prenatal and postnatal care, and or-
25 ganizations providing parenting education and sup-
26 port services.

1 (c) MEETINGS WITH ADVOCACY COMMUNITY.—The
2 Secretary of Health and Human Services, working with
3 all relevant components, shall establish biannual meetings
4 with Shaken Baby Syndrome advocacy groups, parenting
5 support communities, organizations involved in child pro-
6 tection and child maltreatment prevention, and other Fed-
7 eral and State agencies that are or should be involved in
8 prevention activities, including the Joint Commission on
9 the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

10 (d) SUPPORT FOR PARENTS OF SURVIVING CHIL-
11 DREN.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services,
12 along with its components, the Shaken Baby Syndrome
13 advocacy community, parenting support communities, or-
14 ganizations involved in child protection and child maltreat-
15 ment prevention, as well as professional associations and
16 institutions involved in medical research and treatment
17 shall work to provide effective support for the parents of
18 surviving children who suffer serious brain injuries as the
19 result of shaking, especially during the traumatic period
20 immediately following the shaking event, when parents
21 most need support.

22 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
24 this Act \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2007.

