

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.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2006

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

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## 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.

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