



Support Funding for Children, Youth, and Families

April 21, 2025

The Honorable Mark Amodei,
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security

The Honorable Laura Lauren Underwood,
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security

The Honorable Katie Britt, Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security

The Honorable Chris Murphy, Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security

Dear Chairman Amodei, Chairwoman Britt, and Ranking Members Underwood and Murphy,

The *Child Partnership* is a growing coalition that supports a results-driven approach to U.S. foreign assistance that includes children and youth in smart, efficient investments. On behalf of the Partnership, we respectfully request critical funding increases in the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations for key Homeland Security accounts dedicated to combating the online sexual exploitation and abuse of children (OSEAC), specifically within Homeland Security Investigations' Cyber Crimes Center (C3): the Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (CEIU), the Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP), and the Computer Forensics Unit (CFU), including the HERO Child Rescue Corps. Supporting these accounts is critical to protecting American children and national security.

Online sexual exploitation and abuse of children is not only one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world—it is a global epidemic that transcends borders, putting all children at risk, including Americans. The very nature of this crime, facilitated by digital platforms and encrypted networks, demands a coordinated international response, and no federal entity is better positioned to lead that response than the Cyber Crimes Center. In 2023 alone, NCMEC's [CyberTipline](#) received nearly **36 million** reports of suspected child sexual abuse material (CSAM), much of it produced, hosted, and distributed across borders.

Recent global data underscore the scale and urgency of this threat. According to the [Break the Record](#) campaign, an estimated **82 million girls and 69 million boys** were subjected to sexual violence in the

past year alone—equivalent to three girls and two boys every second. In addition, research indicates that more than **300 million children** worldwide encountered some form of online sexual exploitation or abuse in the last 12 months.¹ These abuses constantly cross international borders, putting all children at risk. Victims and perpetrators are connected through complex, often hidden global networks—networks that require sophisticated, international, and well-resourced interventions to dismantle.

HSI's Cyber Crimes Center (C3) has emerged as a global hub for innovation, investigation, and child victim rescue. In FY2024, its operations led to the **identification or rescue of 1,783 children** and the **arrest of 4,959 offenders**, frequently in coordination with foreign law enforcement agencies. These programs must be preserved, and if increased, they can increase speed and scale, saving more children from these abuses and further dismantling crime networks.

The Global Reach of C3's Programs

Cyber Crimes Center (C3) - \$125 million

The C3, which includes the Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (CEIU), the Computer Forensics Unit and the Child Victim Identification Program, leads complex, multinational investigations that dismantle large-scale networks distributing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and rescue victims of severe exploitation. During Operation Renewed Hope III (Feb–Mar 2025), C3 and partners identified 36 victims and generated more than 380 investigative leads across 47 countries. The broader work of C3 contributed to the **identification or rescue of 1,783 child victims in FY2024**, and **4,959 arrests** globally for crimes involving child sexual exploitation. Despite these critical achievements, Operation Renewed Hope does not have the resources it needs to fully execute its goals. We respectfully request **\$125 million** to expand C3's global reach, enhance international coordination, and scale investigative efforts to disrupt predator networks across borders.

Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP)

CVIP protects American children. Tasked with the critical work of identifying children depicted in CSAM, CVIP currently faces a backlog exacerbated by the more than 56,000 unidentified children in INTERPOL's global database—**half of whom are believed to be American**. An additional \$9 million is needed to hire 35 forensic analysts, allowing C3 to dramatically increase the pace of victim identification and rescues.

Computer Forensics Unit (CFU) & HERO Child Rescue Corps

CFU and HERO protect American children and reign in digital criminals. Last year alone, C3 analyzed over seven petabytes of digital evidence. However, as perpetrators deploy increasingly sophisticated technology and encryption, CFU must keep pace. At the same time, the HERO program equips wounded veterans with training to support C3's child exploitation investigations. With an additional \$6 million, C3 could onboard 32 new HERO apprentices, enhancing forensic capacity nationwide and helping close the gap between known exploitation and prosecutable cases.

Together, these programs form a multi-pronged global response to one of the most urgent threats facing children today. Foreign law enforcement agencies frequently rely on the C3 for investigative expertise, training, and technical support—support that, in many countries, would otherwise be unavailable.

Strategic Alignment with the Renewed Hope Act

These funding requests also align with the bipartisan **Renewed Hope Act**, introduced by Senator John Cornyn and Representative Laurel Lee. The bill calls for adding 200 critical personnel to DHS's victim identification and investigative units, including CEIU and the Victim Identification Lab, including forensic analysts, investigators, and technical experts. These staff would be housed at C3 and are essential to fulfilling DHS's growing global mandate.

The U.S. has a moral and strategic imperative to lead on this issue. By investing in Homeland Security Investigations' Cyber Crime Center, we protect American children and extend protection to millions more at risk worldwide. We urge you to support increased funding for this effort in FY2026.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this critical issue. We look forward to speaking with your office about investing in young people. If you have any questions, please contact Leila Milani, lmilani@futureswithoutviolence.org, or Suzanne Berman, Sberman@ChildFund.org. We will contact your staff to schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

The Child Partnership