

# NCSEA Legislative Quarterly Update



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## What is NCSEA? >>>

### Who We Are and What We Do

Our Mission: To promote and influence child support policies and services and to educate, connect, and inspire those who work in child support.

Who We Are: Individuals and organizations with a passion for child support. Our members come from public, non-profit, and private sectors; and from local, state, tribal, national and international jurisdictions.

### NCSEA

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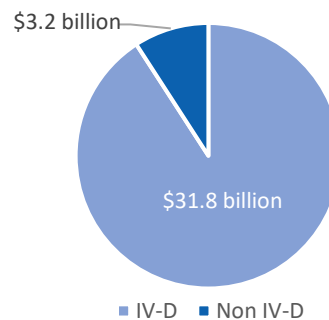
## What is the Child Support Program?

The Child Support Program is a successful federal-state-tribal partnership that seeks to promote economic stability for children whose parents live apart. The program works to ensure that children in single-parent households receive a reliable source of private financial and medical support. The program increases family self-sufficiency, reduces child poverty, and encourages both parents to be involved and committed to their children.

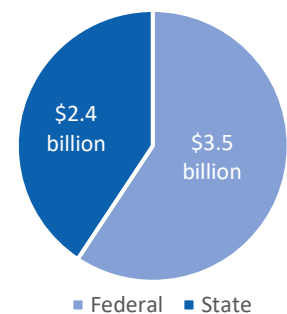
While collecting financial support for the child from the parent who owes child support is its core mission, the program does much more. The program's core functions include: establishing parentage; establishing, modifying, and enforcing child support and medical support orders; and collecting and distributing support. Below is some preliminary data on the program's performance in 2021.

## FY 2021 Child Support Program Performance<sup>1</sup>

### Total FY 2021 Child Support Collections: \$35 Billion



### Total FY 2021 Program Expenditures: \$5.9 Billion



## FY 2021 Performance Highlights

### Federal Performance Measures:

- Paternity Establishment
  - Statewide Percentage: 90%
  - IV-D Percentage: 100%
- Cases with Orders: 88%
- Current Support Collections: 67%
- Arrearage Collections: 69%
- Cost Effectiveness: \$5.27

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ocse/fy\\_2021\\_preliminary\\_report.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ocse/fy_2021_preliminary_report.pdf)

## Pending Child Support Legislation >>>

In 2022, NCSEA is working with House and Senate members on three NCSEA-supported bills. They are:

### Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act ([S. 534](#))

The bill is NCSEA's top legislative priority for the remainder of 2022 and has been supported by NCSEA for a number of years. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on July 13, 2021. Introduced by Senator John Thune (R-SD) with co-sponsor Ron Wyden (D-OR), the measure would give tribal governments equal and direct access to the Federal Tax Refund Offset Program and other resources to locate parents while ensuring that all Internal Revenue Service confidentiality safeguards are met. NCSEA is working closely with the House Ways and Means Committee to address concerns about the safeguards on maintaining the confidentiality and security of federal tax information accessed by contractors working with child support agencies.

### Ensuring Children Receive Support Act ([H.R. 8193](#))

Introduced by Representative Beth Van Duyne (R-TX), the legislation would require the Department of State to revoke passports for certain individuals who fail to make child support payments. Under current law, if the Department of Health and Human Services certifies that an individual owes more than \$2,500 in child support, the Department of State must refuse to issue the individual a passport and may revoke a previously issued passport. Under the bill, the Department of State must revoke the previously issued passport. NCSEA supports the concept and has communicated its desire the legislation provide child support agencies with flexibility and discretion in determining when to use passport revocation as an enforcement tool.

### Inmate Financial Accountability Task Force Act ([H.R. 7680](#))

Introduced by Representative Lance Gooden (R-TX) with co-sponsors Fred Keller (R-PA) and Randy K. Weber (R-TX), the legislation would establish a joint task force to improve the Bureau of Prison's (BOP) management of criminal and civil debt collection processes in its Inmate Trust Fund Accounts and to improve coordination between relevant agencies. NCSEA expressed support for the bill while emphasizing a need for more transparency with regard to the accounts and requiring the BOP to honor an income withholding order without the consent of the inmate. Read the full letter [here](#).

### Providing Adequate Resources to Enhance Needed Time with Sons and Daughters Act (PARENTS Act [S. 503](#))

Passed by unanimous consent in the Senate, the bipartisan bill was introduced in the Senate by John Cornyn (R-TX) with Democratic co-sponsors Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and Ben Cardin (D-MD). The legislation would streamline a process to allow states to use existing child support performance incentive funds to establish voluntary parenting time arrangements without requesting a waiver from OCSE. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) consistently approves those waivers, so it is an unnecessary administrative step.

## Other Child Support Related Updates >>>

### Children's Bureau and OCSE Issue Joint Letter Supporting Updated Referral Policy

In July 2022, the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) Children's Bureau (CB) and Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) issued a joint letter encouraging child welfare agencies to implement policies that require an assignment of the rights to child support for children who receive federal foster care maintenance payments only in very rare circumstances. The letter references studies that have shown that reducing a parent's income by requiring that parent to pay child support impedes their ability to engage in reunification efforts and securing an assignment in these cases is generally deemed not to be cost effective. The goal is to ensure only cases that have been thoroughly reviewed, and will not disrupt the reunification process, are referred to the child support agency. Child support agencies would continue processing appropriate cases, while being less intrusive in the lives of the families served. Read the full letter [here](#).

### NCSEA Quick Facts for Legislators & Interested Parties

NCSEA maintains Quick Facts on a variety of child support topics for easy reference. These information briefs are accessible on our [website](#).