



Testimony Re: FY2018 Budget: Office of the Child Advocate
Senate Finance Committee
May 18, 2017
Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its strong support to increase funds allocated to the FY2018 budget for the Office of the Child Advocate.

We applaud the extensive work of the small team in the Child Advocate's Office and we would like to respectfully request additional funding to support their additional staffing needs. We are very concerned about the findings documented in the Office of the Child Advocate's Child Fatality Review Panel report and think it is in the best interest of children and families that the OCA be able to fund additional positions to further strengthen their vital work.

Given the critical role the Office of the Child Advocate plays in protecting our state's children by being a check and balance for the Department of Children, Youth & Families, it is important that the agency have adequate resources to effectively protect our most vulnerable children and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.