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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

United States Senate

March 31, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
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Washington, D.C. 20510

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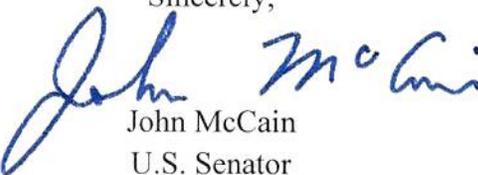
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Dear Chairman Harkin,

Recent estimates indicate that one in five young girls and one in 20 boys is a victim of child sexual abuse. In my home state of Arizona, the National Children's Alliance reports that 3,821 children were treated for sexual abuse in Children Advocacy Centers in 2013 alone. While overall numbers and statistics are difficult to determine with precision due to the unfortunate fact that many cases go unreported, the prevalence of abuse among our nation's children is something lawmakers, educators, and policymakers should take note of. Therefore, I am requesting that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hold a hearing as soon as possible to examine the scope of this serious problem and to consider proposals, including those aimed at our improving our education curriculum, designed to improve prevention and intervention.

Recent scholarship has pointed to the effectiveness of educational initiatives in the fight against child sexual abuse. Prevention education focused on elementary age children can teach children how to protect and defend themselves. And, programs and trainings for college-students in fields such as education, social work, child psychology, and nursing can equip these future educators and social workers with effective strategies for prevention. Educating our children and the teachers and professionals they interact with daily has the potential to prevent abuse, increase reporting, and mitigate some of the long-term effects of such abuse. I request this hearing to draw attention to this serious and sensitive issue and to explore what steps can be taken to ensure that our education system is providing children and teachers with the tools they need to confront and prevent this unfortunate reality. Thank you for the consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



John McCain
U.S. Senator