



## Elly & Cameron Lafkin | Virginia



### Elly's story

Elly Lafkin and her husband Cameron searched for a child care provider for their infant daughter, Camden. They were referred to a family child care provider by two friends. Taking precautionary steps, the Lafkins' ordered an independent background check on the recommended provider. The background check did not flag any negative warnings, and they enrolled Camden in the family child care home. Four weeks later, they received a devastating phone call. Their infant daughter was found unresponsive while in the provider's care and – despite more than an hour of CPR – she could not be revived. The couple later learned that the child care provider had been caught with methamphetamines and marijuana in her home while caring for six additional children.

In addition, the provider was on probation, convicted of two felony crimes for money laundering, fraud, and alias identification. Due to the provider's alias identification, the Lafkins' background check was insufficient. After their daughter's death, Elly and Cameron advocated for a background check bill in Virginia known as "Cami's Law," which was passed in 2013. The Lafkins' advocacy has helped to improve comprehensive background checks and increase quality child care in federal and state policy.

### Child Care Stats in VA

**The cost of center care for 2 children in Virginia is nearly twice the annual cost of tuition at a four year college.**

**U.S. businesses lose approximately \$4.4 billion annually due to employee absenteeism as the result of child care breakdowns.**

**There are 393,407 children under the age of 6 in Virginia who could be in need of child care.**

### Congressional Request: 2017

CCAAoA is requesting a \$1.4 billion increase (over the FY 2016 level) for next year to ensure that nearly 217,000 children and families don't lose access to care, and also to help states meet the requirements of the 2014 CCDBG law.

We ask that you co-sponsor the "Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act of 2017" (H.R. 947/S.337), which would:

- Provide up to 12 weeks of leave for working families
- Enable workers to earn up to 66% of their monthly income while on leave
- Cover workers in all companies, no matter size
- Be administered through the newly created Office of Paid Family and Medical Leave

We also ask that you co-sponsor the "Promoting Affordable Childcare for Everyone (PACE) Act of 2017," which would expand and enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) to reflect the realities of modern-day child care costs. The PACE Act would make CDCTC refundable and increase the credit rate, which would greatly benefit millions of working families struggling to pay their monthly bills as child care is the greatest expense after housing.