



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

# Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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## Grassley Advances Bill to Help Children Affected by Methamphetamine

WASHINGTON – Sen. Chuck Grassley today won Senate passage of his legislation to improve funding for and access to family treatment programs that help families in Iowa and elsewhere overcome methamphetamine addiction and the resulting family trauma.

“Methamphetamine addiction affects entire families, not just the person abusing the drug,” Grassley said. “It makes sense to treat the entire family, especially when the treatment can keep families together and minimize children’s exposure to foster care. Iowans and other Midwesterners have been very helpful in coming to Washington to tell their stories and help to shape this bill, and I’m grateful for their generosity and honesty.”

In April, Grassley convened a hearing in the Finance Committee, which he chairs, and heard testimony from Allison Bruno of Cedar Rapids. Bruno is the mother of two children and has been clean and sober from meth for three years. She graduated from the Heart of Iowa family treatment program and is a member of the Moms Off Meth Iowa-based support group. She is attending college and said she intends to be a social worker focused on helping other mothers who suffer from substance abuse.

Last month, the Finance Committee unanimously approved Grassley’s bipartisan bill, the *Improving Outcomes for Children Affected by Meth Act of 2006*. The bill contains a series of measures to help states deal with the impact of the meth epidemic on an already overburdened child welfare system, including:

- Directing \$40 million a year toward grants for regional partnerships. These partnerships will increase the well-being of, and improve permanent outcomes for, children affected by methamphetamine abuse and addiction. The grants will improve collaboration and coordination among providers of services for children and families. The federal Health and Human Services Secretary is directed to give consideration for receipt of these grants to rural areas that have a lack of capacity for access to comprehensive family treatment services. “By emphasizing comprehensive family treatment, we’re promoting a promising strategy for families to recover from meth addiction together,” Grassley said.
- Expanding the Mentoring of Children of Prisoners program, so that children in areas that have not been able to access these mentoring services may gain access to these important programs, and;

- Increasing and improving access for needed funding for Indian Tribes as well as increasing states' accountability.

“I’m glad the full Senate passed these improvements unanimously,” Grassley said. “I look forward to continuing to work with Iowa families and child welfare providers to improve the well-being of children and parents harmed by the methamphetamine epidemic.”

A companion House bill has received committee approval and awaits full House consideration, which is expected soon.