**White House Children’s and Youth Advisory Council**

Letter for the President of the United States and Congressional Consideration

28 January 2022

**Overview**

When young people are constructively empowered to be engaged citizens, they are evident assets to development. Through organization, activism, community leadership, and councils, young people of all ages have discovered their voice. Issues such as climate change and COVID-19 directly and severely impact children and young people and having their voices heard is critical to improving the lives of everyone around the world.

A youth council is a platform that provides children and youth with the opportunity to further develop skills such as leadership, team building, aptitude for communication, and flexibility in thought while implementing direct change within their respective communities. Youth councils, in whichever form they adopt, provide young people a significant involvement in decision making and policy initiatives.

**Justification**

A White House Children's and Youth Advisory Council would be a watershed moment in progressing domestic and global youth development by creating an unprecedented international investment channel to endorse youth leadership and provide young people with the political platform and support they need to promote peace in their communities. Investing in youth helps families, allows young people to interact with the government, and make their voices heard.

**Supporting Evidence**

With more than a fifth of the world's population aged 15 to 25, and more than a billion of these young people living in developing countries, it is critical that adolescents develop the skills they need to contribute to their immediate households, governments, regional and international communities. Governments around the world are making critical decisions on behalf of young people without young people's input. The United States is in a unique position to engage with young people on areas that affect them the most– climate change, COVID-19, and foreign policy issues.

**Purpose of Legislation**

To develop a United States policy of support for children and youth across the globe as a means of promoting U.S. sponsorship for youth development and security efforts both domestically and internationally. Flipping the narrative about young people in a way that they are seen as capacity builders instead as challenges is critical to creating and implementing policy.

**Objectives**

1. To define a US policy to promote children and youth advancement;
2. To ensure that young people's perspectives and objectives are merged into the concept and implementation of US-funded development ,peace, and security practices;
3. To propose new ideas and challenges that young people face;
4. To mentor the next generation of public officials;

**Strategy and Collaboration**

Establish a White House Children's and Youth Advisory Youth Council by bringing together young people from across the world and within the United States to advise the US government on concerns impacting children and youth.

1. Ensure the policy deliverables focus heavily on caregiving, education, and security mechanisms.
2. Ensure financial and technical support to youth-led council initiatives and partners of the White House Children’s and Youth Advisory Council dedicated to children’s and youth development.
3. Ensure funding for mentoring and vocational training which includes but is not limited to workshops with pertinent partners and White House officials.

Participants will be selected based on:

1. Experience- Individuals who do not have that much experience. This will emphasize mentorship and provide a wide variety of young people with the opportunity to experience how a government works.
2. Environment- Individuals who are facing problems in their communities that will be discussed and addressed.
3. Age- Individuals between the ages of 15-25.
4. Percentage of the participants designated to be women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities.

The White House will be required to report out on how they addressed children and youth issues every 6 months to the youth council.

**What We Expect to Improve**

The White House Children’s and Youth Advisory Council would create an unprecedented mechanism to support youth leadership and provide young people globally with the political platform they need to promote peace in their communities. The result will be more young people engaged in peacebuilding, political solutions, and public service. The Council will also improve communication, collaboration, and respect between young people and governments. By having more communication, collaboration, and accountability between young people and governments, it will result in debunking stereotypes and a decrease in misunderstanding. Additionally, having a youth advisory council will improve trust between young people and government entities that are meant to support them.

**Questions**

1. How do we get White House administration to care?
2. How do we get White House administration to listen to young people and avoid tokenism?
3. Who would be the White House Official? - Suggestions: Dr. Jill Biden, First Lady of the United States.
4. How does this prevent child sexual violence?

Signed: Emily Davis and Taylor Murray