



KIDS ARE WAITING
Fix Foster Care Now

Fostering Connections to Success & Increasing Adoptions Act

HR 6893

Introduced by Representatives Jim McDermott (D-WA) and Jerry Weller (R-IL)

Title IV-B, Part 1, re-named Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program

Kinship Caregiver Supports

- **Title IV-E Relative Guardianship Program** – a state option to support exits from foster care to judicial custody of relative; reunification and adoption to have been ruled out based on best interest of child; relative caregiver must be fully licensed; child to have resided with relative a minimum of 6 months; subsidy cannot exceed foster care payment. Grandfathers in families currently receiving Guardianship Subsidies as part of a Title IV-E Waiver program, such as in IL. (Sec. 101)
- **Family Connection Grants (total \$15 M / year, 2009-13)** for state or local public/private non-profits for Kinship Navigator programs (\$5 M/yr), Family Search and Engagement programs, Family Group Decision-making programs, Residential Family Treatment Programs. (Sec. 102)
- **Requires notification of close relatives** within 30 days of a foster placement. (Sec. 103)
- **Allows case by case waiver of non-safety foster care licensure standards**, for relative caregivers. HHS to do study of relative foster caregivers and waivers at two years. (Sec. 104)
- **Federal Parent Locator Service** access for kin connections. (Sec. 105)

Assistance to Foster Youth Up to the Age of 21

- **Extends federal foster care maintenance payments up to the age of 19, 20 or 21**, inclusive of supervised independent living settings. Youth must be involved in productive activity such as education, training or work. State option. (Sec. 201)
- **Transition Plan** - requires personalized 90 day pre-emancipation plan. (Sec. 202)
- **Avoids Permanency Disincentives** - Extends adoption assistance and guardianship payments up to age 19, 20, or 21 for children adopted or entering guardianship after attaining the age of 16. State options. All Chafee IL services and Education & Training Voucher benefits also extended. (Sec. 201)

IV-E Short Term Training – allows Title IV-E training funds for private non-profit child welfare workers, court personnel, CASA/GALs, and relative caregivers; graduated reimbursement schedule. (Sec. 203)

Educational Stability – Requires plan for ensuring the educational stability of children in foster care and mandate assurance of school attendance, supports transportation costs to maintain foster children in their neighborhood school. (Sec. 204)

Improving Oversight of Health Care – Requires oversight plan for the health care needs of foster children -- accounting for the assessment and treatment of health conditions, continuity of care, medical records, and prescription drugs. (Sec. 205)

Keeping Siblings Together – Requires reasonable efforts to place siblings together when removed from their homes; if not placed together, requires frequent visitation. (Sec. 206)

Tribal Access to Foster Care and Adoption funds – Title IV-E funding access to tribal governments for children in their care. Language incorporated from HR 4688, Pomeroy / Weller Tribal bill. \$3 M/year authorized for national technical assistance center and to provide one time technical assistance grants to Tribes. (Sec. 301 and 302)

Extending and Improving Adoption Incentives – Improves the Adoption Incentives Program for children adopted out of foster care, including updated base year (2007) and increased bonuses for special needs and older child adoptions. Reauthorizes program for 2008-2012, \$43 M / year (Sec. 401)

Promoting the Adoption Tax Credit – Requires efforts to inform prospective adoptive parents of foster children of potential eligibility for the credit. (Sec. 402)

De-linking Title IV-E Adoption Assistance from child's birth family income (AFDC lookback). Gradual, prospective de-link applies to older children, those in care for 5 yrs or longer, add'l sibling adoptions beginning 2010, all children by 2018. (Sec.403)

Bill is Fully Offset – prohibition against fraudulent claiming of a child for EITC (Sec. 501); authorization for US Treasury investment of operating cash (Sec. 502), cost savings from Relative Guardianship Subsidy.