

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2982

AN ACT

To amend the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to
authorize appropriations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Reconnecting Home-
3 less Youth Act of 2008”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Section 302 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act
6 (42 U.S.C. 5701) is amended—

7 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and
8 (5) as paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), respectively; and

9 (2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
10 lowing:

11 “(3) services to such young people should be de-
12 veloped and provided using a positive youth develop-
13 ment approach that ensures a young person a sense
14 of—

15 “(A) safety and structure;

16 “(B) belonging and membership;

17 “(C) self-worth and social contribution;

18 “(D) independence and control over one’s
19 life; and

20 “(E) closeness in interpersonal relation-
21 ships.”.

22 **SEC. 3. BASIC CENTER PROGRAM.**

23 (a) SERVICES PROVIDED.—Section 311 of the Run-
24 away and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5711) is
25 amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a)(2)(B), by striking clause
2 (i) and inserting the following:

3 “(i) safe and appropriate shelter pro-
4 vided for not to exceed 21 days; and”; and
5 (2) in subsection (b)(2)—

6 (A) by striking “(2) The” and inserting
7 “(2)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph
8 (B), the”;

9 (B) by striking “\$100,000” and inserting
10 “\$200,000”;

11 (C) by striking “\$45,000” and inserting
12 “\$70,000”; and

13 (D) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(B) For fiscal years 2009 and 2010, the amount al-
15 lotted under paragraph (1) with respect to a State for a
16 fiscal year shall be not less than the amount allotted under
17 paragraph (1) with respect to such State for fiscal year
18 2008.

19 “(C) Whenever the Secretary determines that any
20 part of the amount allotted under paragraph (1) to a State
21 for a fiscal year will not be obligated before the end of
22 the fiscal year, the Secretary shall reallocate such part to the
23 remaining States for obligation for the fiscal year.”.

1 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 312(b) of the Runaway
 2 and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5712(b)) is amend-
 3 ed—

4 (1) in paragraph (11), by striking “and” at the
 5 end;

6 (2) in paragraph (12), by striking the period
 7 and inserting “; and”; and

8 (3) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(13) shall develop an adequate emergency pre-
 10 paredness and management plan.”.

11 **SEC. 4. TRANSITIONAL LIVING GRANT PROGRAM.**

12 (a) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 322(a) of the Runaway
 13 and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714–2(a)) is amend-
 14 ed—

15 (1) in paragraph (1)—

16 (A) by striking “directly or indirectly” and
 17 inserting “by grant, agreement, or contract”;
 18 and

19 (B) by striking “services” the first place it
 20 appears and inserting “provide, by grant, agree-
 21 ment, or contract, services,”;

22 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “a continuous
 23 period not to exceed 540 days, except that” and all
 24 that follows and inserting the following: “a contin-
 25 uous period not to exceed 540 days, or in exceptional

1 circumstances 635 days, except that a youth in a
 2 program under this part who has not reached 18
 3 years of age on the last day of the 635-day period
 4 may, in exceptional circumstances and if otherwise
 5 qualified for the program, remain in the program
 6 until the youth’s 18th birthday;”;

7 (3) in paragraph (14), by striking “and” at the
 8 end;

9 (4) in paragraph (15), by striking the period
 10 and inserting “; and”; and

11 (5) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(16) to develop an adequate emergency pre-
 13 paredness and management plan.”.

14 (b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 322(c) of the Runaway
 15 and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714–2(c)) is amend-
 16 ed by—

17 (1) striking “part, the term” and inserting the
 18 following: “part—

19 “(1) the term”;

20 (2) striking the period and inserting “; and”;
 21 and

22 (3) adding at the end thereof the following:

23 “(2) the term ‘exceptional circumstances’
 24 means circumstances in which a youth would benefit

1 to an unusual extent from additional time in the
 2 program.”.

3 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR RESEARCH EVALUATION, DEM-**
 4 **ONSTRATION, AND SERVICE PROJECTS.**

5 Section 343 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act
 6 (42 U.S.C. 5714–23) is amended—

7 (1) in subsection (b)—

8 (A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
 9 by striking “special consideration” and insert-
 10 ing “priority”;

11 (B) in paragraph (8)—

12 (i) by striking “to health” and insert-
 13 ing “to quality health”;

14 (ii) by striking “mental health care”
 15 and inserting “behavioral health care”; and

16 (iii) by striking “and” at the end;

17 (C) in paragraph (9), by striking the pe-
 18 riod at the end and inserting “, including access
 19 to educational and workforce programs to
 20 achieve outcomes such as decreasing secondary
 21 school dropout rates, increasing rates of attain-
 22 ing a secondary school diploma or its recognized
 23 equivalent, or increasing placement and reten-
 24 tion in postsecondary education or advanced
 25 workforce training programs; and”;

1 (D) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(10) providing programs, including innovative
3 programs, that assist youth in obtaining and main-
4 taining safe and stable housing, and which may in-
5 clude programs with supportive services that con-
6 tinue after the youth complete the remainder of the
7 programs.”; and

8 (2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the
9 following:

10 “(c) In selecting among applicants for grants under
11 subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

12 “(1) give priority to applicants who have experi-
13 ence working with runaway or homeless youth; and

14 “(2) ensure that the applicants selected—

15 “(A) represent diverse geographic regions
16 of the United States; and

17 “(B) carry out projects that serve diverse
18 populations of runaway or homeless youth.”.

19 **SEC. 6. COORDINATING, TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND OTHER**
20 **ACTIVITIES.**

21 Part D of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42
22 U.S.C. 5714–21 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
23 the following:

1 **“SEC. 345. PERIODIC ESTIMATE OF INCIDENCE AND PREVA-**
2 **LENCE OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.**

3 “(a) PERIODIC ESTIMATE.—Not later than 2 years
4 after the date of enactment of the Reconnecting Homeless
5 Youth Act of 2008, and at 5-year intervals thereafter, the
6 Secretary, in consultation with the United States Inter-
7 agency Council on Homelessness, shall prepare and submit
8 to the Committee on Education and Labor of the House
9 of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary
10 of the Senate, and make available to the public, a report—

11 “(1) by using the best quantitative and quali-
12 tative social science research methods available, con-
13 taining an estimate of the incidence and prevalence
14 of runaway and homeless individuals who are not
15 less than 13 years of age but are less than 26 years
16 of age; and

17 “(2) that includes with such estimate an assess-
18 ment of the characteristics of such individuals.

19 “(b) CONTENT.—The report required by subsection
20 (a) shall include—

21 “(1) the results of conducting a survey of, and
22 direct interviews with, a representative sample of
23 runaway and homeless individuals who are not less
24 than 13 years of age but are less than 26 years of
25 age, to determine past and current—

1 “(A) socioeconomic characteristics of such
2 individuals; and

3 “(B) barriers to such individuals obtain-
4 ing—

5 “(i) safe, quality, and affordable hous-
6 ing;

7 “(ii) comprehensive and affordable
8 health insurance and health services; and

9 “(iii) incomes, public benefits, sup-
10 portive services, and connections to caring
11 adults; and

12 “(2) such other information as the Secretary
13 determines, in consultation with States, units of
14 local government, and national nongovernmental or-
15 ganizations concerned with homelessness, may be
16 useful.

17 “(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—If the Secretary enters into
18 any contract with a non-Federal entity for purposes of car-
19 rying out subsection (a), such entity shall be a nongovern-
20 mental organization, or an individual, determined by the
21 Secretary to have appropriate expertise in quantitative
22 and qualitative social science research.”.

1 **SEC. 7. SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM.**

2 Section 351(b) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth
3 Act (42 U.S.C. 5714–41(b)) is amended by inserting
4 “public and” after “priority to”.

5 **SEC. 8. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**

6 Part F of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42
7 U.S.C. 5714a et seq.) is amended by inserting after sec-
8 tion 386 the following:

9 **“SEC. 386A. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**

10 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE STAND-
11 ARDS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
12 of the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008, the Sec-
13 retary shall issue rules that specify performance standards
14 for public and nonprofit private entities and agencies that
15 receive grants under sections 311, 321, and 351.

16 “(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult
17 with representatives of public and nonprofit private enti-
18 ties and agencies that receive grants under this title, in-
19 cluding statewide and regional nonprofit organizations (in-
20 cluding combinations of such organizations) that receive
21 grants under this title, and national nonprofit organiza-
22 tions concerned with youth homelessness, in developing
23 the performance standards required by subsection (a).

24 “(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF PERFORMANCE STAND-
25 ARDS.—The Secretary shall integrate the performance
26 standards into the processes of the Department of Health

1 and Human Services for grantmaking, monitoring, and
2 evaluation for programs under sections 311, 321, and
3 351.”.

4 **SEC. 9. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY**
5 **AND REPORT.**

6 (a) STUDY.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of
8 the United States shall conduct a study, including
9 making findings and recommendations, relating to
10 the processes for making grants under parts A, B,
11 and E of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42
12 U.S.C. 5711 et seq., 5714–1 et seq., 5714–41).

13 (2) SUBJECTS.—In particular, the Comptroller
14 General shall study—

15 (A) the Secretary’s written responses to
16 and other communications with applicants who
17 do not receive grants under part A, B, or E of
18 such Act, to determine if the information pro-
19 vided in the responses and communications is
20 conveyed clearly;

21 (B) the content and structure of the grant
22 application documents, and of other associated
23 documents (including grant announcements), to
24 determine if the requirements of the applica-
25 tions and other associated documents are pre-

1 sented and structured in a way that gives an
2 applicant a clear understanding of the informa-
3 tion that the applicant must provide in each
4 portion of an application to successfully com-
5 plete it, and a clear understanding of the termi-
6 nology used throughout the application and
7 other associated documents;

8 (C) the peer review process for applications
9 for the grants, including the selection of peer
10 reviewers, the oversight of the process by staff
11 of the Department of Health and Human Serv-
12 ices, and the extent to which such staff make
13 funding determinations based on the comments
14 and scores of the peer reviewers;

15 (D) the typical timeframe, and the process
16 and responsibilities of such staff, for responding
17 to applicants for the grants, and the efforts
18 made by such staff to communicate with the ap-
19 plicants when funding decisions or funding for
20 the grants is delayed, such as when funding is
21 delayed due to funding of a program through
22 appropriations made under a continuing resolu-
23 tion; and

24 (E) the plans for implementation of, and
25 the implementation of, where practicable, the

1 technical assistance and training programs car-
2 ried out under section 342 of the Runaway and
3 Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5714–22), and
4 the effect of such programs on the application
5 process for the grants.

6 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
7 of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall
8 prepare and submit to the Committee on Education and
9 Labor of the House of Representatives and the Committee
10 on the Judiciary of the Senate a report containing the
11 findings and recommendations resulting from the study.

12 **SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.**

13 (a) HOMELESS YOUTH.—Section 387(3) of the Run-
14 away and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a(3)) is
15 amended—

16 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
17 by striking “The” and all that follows through
18 “means” and inserting “The term ‘homeless’, used
19 with respect to a youth, means”; and

20 (2) in subparagraph (A)—

21 (A) in clause (i)—

22 (i) by striking “not more than” each
23 place it appears and inserting “less than”;
24 and

(ii) by inserting after “age” the last place it appears the following: “, or is less than a higher maximum age if the State where the center is located has an applicable State or local law (including a regulation) that permits such higher maximum age in compliance with licensure requirements for child-and youth-serving facilities”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “age;” and inserting the following: “age and either—

“(I) less than 22 years of age; or

“(II) not less than 22 years of age, as of the expiration of the maximum period of stay permitted under section 322(a)(2) if such individual commences such stay before reaching 22 years of age;”.

(b) RUNAWAY YOUTH.—Section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (5), (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

1 “(4) RUNAWAY YOUTH.—The term ‘runaway’,
 2 used with respect to a youth, means an individual
 3 who is less than 18 years of age and who absents
 4 himself or herself from home or a place of legal resi-
 5 dence without the permission of a parent or legal
 6 guardian.”.

7 **SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 Section 388(a) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth
 9 Act (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)) is amended—

10 (1) in paragraph (1)—

11 (A) by striking “is authorized” and insert-
 12 ing “are authorized”;

13 (B) by striking “part E) \$105,000,000 for
 14 fiscal year 2004” and inserting “section 345
 15 and part E) \$140,000,000 for fiscal year
 16 2009”; and

17 (C) by striking “2005, 2006, 2007, and
 18 2008” and inserting “2010, 2011, 2012, and
 19 2013”;

20 (2) in paragraph (3)—

21 (A) by striking “In” and inserting the fol-
 22 lowing:

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In”;

24 (B) by inserting “(other than section
 25 345)” before the period; and

1 (C) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(B) PERIODIC ESTIMATE.—There are au-
3 thorized to be appropriated to carry out section
4 345 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal
5 years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.”; and
6 (3) in paragraph (4)—

7 (A) by striking “is authorized” and insert-
8 ing “are authorized”; and

9 (B) by striking “such sums as may be nec-
10 essary for fiscal years 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007,
11 and 2008” and inserting “\$25,000,000 for fis-
12 cal year 2009 and such sums as may be nec-
13 essary for fiscal years 2010, 2011, 2012, and
14 2013”.

Passed the Senate September 25 (legislative day,
September 17), 2008.

Attest:

Secretary.

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to authorize appropriations, and for other purposes.