

Union Calendar No. 559

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 7995

[Report No. 119-642]

To update the purposes of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood to reflect research and the input of youth with lived experience about the importance of long-term relationships to future success.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2026

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin (for herself and Mr. CAREY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

MAY 11, 2026

Additional sponsors: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. SCHWEIKERT

MAY 11, 2026

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as printed in the House of Representatives on March 19, 2026]

A BILL

To update the purposes of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood to reflect research and the input of youth with lived experience about the importance of long-term relationships to future success.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Chafee Opportunities*
 5 *for New Networks and Existing Connection Trust Act” or*
 6 *the “CONNECT Act”.*

7 **SEC. 2. UPDATING THE PURPOSES OF THE JOHN H. CHAFEE**
 8 **FOSTER CARE PROGRAM FOR SUCCESSFUL**
 9 **TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD.**

10 *(a) UPDATING OF PURPOSES.—*

11 *(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 477(a) of the Social*
 12 *Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677(a)) is amended—*

13 *(A) by striking paragraph (2);*

14 *(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and*
 15 *(3) through (7) as paragraphs (3) through (8),*
 16 *respectively; and*

17 *(C) by inserting after “conducted—” the*
 18 *following:*

19 *“(1) to help children who have experienced foster*
 20 *care at age 14 or older to develop and maintain sus-*
 21 *tained, supportive relationships with adults (includ-*
 22 *ing kin or fictive kin who are not serving as place-*
 23 *ment), mentors, and peers (including peers who have*
 24 *experienced foster care), with a goal of providing mul-*
 25 *tiple and varied paths to reduce isolation and ensur-*

1 *ing that the youth develop lifelong connections and*
2 *support networks;*

3 *“(2) to support youth still in foster care who*
4 *have experienced foster care at age 14 or older in ex-*
5 *ercising the rights referred to in section 475A to par-*
6 *ticipate in developing their permanency plan and re-*
7 *ceive written information about available services and*
8 *steps the agency is taking to support the plan, as well*
9 *as to facilitate pre- and post-permanency peer sup-*
10 *port, mentoring, connections with kin, and referrals*
11 *to additional appropriate programs and services to*
12 *help youth achieve their permanency goals;”.*

13 *(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made*
14 *by paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date that is*
15 *1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

16 *(b) GUIDANCE.—Within 1 year after the date of the*
17 *enactment of this Act and after consulting with youth with*
18 *lived experience in foster care, the Secretary of Health and*
19 *Human Services shall issue guidance to States and Tribal*
20 *child welfare agencies regarding the purposes set forth in*
21 *paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 477(a) of the Social Secu-*
22 *rity Act, that includes, at a minimum—*

23 *(1) examples of services and support eligible for*
24 *Federal funding under part B of title IV of such Act,*
25 *under part E of such title as part of completing and*

1 *following the case plan requirements provided for in*
2 *section 475A of such Act, or under section 477 of such*
3 *Act, including individual youth support, family sup-*
4 *port, and peer support to engage youth during reuni-*
5 *fication, guardianship, or adoption proceedings;*

6 *(2) best practices for facilitating peer support,*
7 *mentoring, and the development and maintenance of*
8 *lifelong connections, including practices that support*
9 *sibling, tribal, and community connections, including*
10 *minimum qualifications and training for persons*
11 *providing mentoring and peer support;*

12 *(3) standards of outreach to and notification of*
13 *eligible youth, including youth with a planned per-*
14 *manent living arrangement, to ensure referrals to ap-*
15 *propriate programs and services; and*

16 *(4) protocols for documentation of support and*
17 *relationship-building activities under section 477 of*
18 *such Act that are required by section 475A of such*
19 *Act to be included in a child's case plan, sufficient to*
20 *permit review under the case review system described*
21 *in section 475(5) of such Act.*

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