

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 920

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue an annual report card on the performance of the States in protecting children placed for adoption, in foster care, or with a guardian, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 17, 1997

Mr. WYDEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue an annual report card on the performance of the States in protecting children placed for adoption, in foster care, or with a guardian, 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,*
- 3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**
- 4 This Act may be cited as the “Adoption Report Card
- 5 Act of 1997”.

1 **SEC. 2. ANNUAL REPORT CARD ON STATE PERFORMANCE**2 **IN PROTECTING CHILDREN.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part E of title IV of the Social
4 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 670 et seq.) is amended by adding
5 at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 479A. ANNUAL REPORT CARD.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall issue an an-
8 nual report card containing ratings of the performance of
9 each State in protecting children who are placed for adop-
10 tion, in foster care, or with a guardian, in the State. The
11 report card shall include ratings on outcome measures for
12 categories related to the family conditions of the children.

13 “(b) OUTCOME MEASURES.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall de-
15 velop, after consulting with child advocacy organiza-
16 tions, a set of outcome measures to be used in pre-
17 paring the report card.

18 “(2) CATEGORIES.—In developing the outcome
19 measures, the Secretary shall develop measures for
20 categories relating to—

21 “(A) the number of placements for adop-
22 tion, in foster care, or with a guardian;

23 “(B) the number of children who leave fos-
24 ter care at the age of majority without having
25 been adopted or placed with a guardian;

1 “(C) the median and mean length of stay
2 in foster care;

3 “(D) the median and mean length of time
4 between the availability of a child for adoption
5 and the adoption of the child;

6 “(E) the median and mean length of time
7 between the beginning of foster care for a child
8 and the finalization of a placement plan for the
9 child by the agency involved;

10 “(F) the number of children in foster care,
11 specifying, in the case of a child in foster care
12 who is a child with special needs, each factor or
13 condition that makes the child a child with spe-
14 cial needs (including the age and ethnicity of
15 the child), as determined by the State in ac-
16 cordance with section 473(c);

17 “(G) the average annual costs for a child
18 in foster care, and costs for any alternative liv-
19 ing arrangements for a child who would other-
20 wise be in foster care and how there costs are
21 allocated;

22 “(H) the median and average length of
23 time required to terminate parental rights for a
24 child after the child enters foster care;

1 “(I) the number of parents whose parental
2 rights have been terminated;

3 “(J) the number of children that are af-
4 fected due to the termination of parental rights;

5 “(K) the median and average length of
6 time required to place a child for adoption once
7 parental rights are terminated for the child;

8 “(L) the average number of times a child
9 is placed in foster care before the child is per-
10 manently adopted and the number of place-
11 ments the child experiences; and

12 “(M) the number of deaths of children in
13 foster care, and substantiated cases of abuse or
14 neglect among children in foster care.

15 “(3) MEASURES.—In developing the outcome
16 measures, the Secretary shall use measures from the
17 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting
18 System established under section 479 to the maxi-
19 mum extent possible.

20 “(c) RATING SYSTEM.—The Secretary shall develop
21 a system (including using State census data and poverty
22 rates) to rate the performance of each State based on the
23 outcome measures.

24 “(d) INFORMATION.—In order to receive funds under
25 this part, a State shall annually provide to the Secretary

1 such adoption, foster care, and guardianship information
2 as the Secretary may determine to be necessary to issue
3 the report card for the State.

4 “(e) PREPARATION AND ISSUANCE.—On October 1,
5 1998, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall pre-
6 pare, submit to Congress, and issue to the States the re-
7 port card described in subsection (a). Each report card
8 shall rate the performance of a State on each outcome
9 measure developed under subsection (b), include an expla-
10 nation of the rating system developed under subsection (c)
11 and the way in which scores are determined under the rat-
12 ing system, analyze high and low performances for the
13 State, and make recommendations to the State for im-
14 provement.”.

15 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 471(a) of
16 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 671(a)) is amended—
17 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
18 (17);

19 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
20 graph (18) (as added by section 1808(a) of the
21 Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 (Public
22 Law 104-188; 110 Stat. 1903)) and inserting “;
23 and”;

24 (3) by redesignating paragraph (18) (as added
25 by section 505(3) of the Personal Responsibility and

1 Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Pub-
2 lic Law 104-193; 110 Stat. 2278)) as paragraph
3 (19); and

4 (4) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(20) provides that the State shall annually
6 provide to the Secretary the information required
7 under section 479A.”.

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