

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2847

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 21, 2017

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

AN ACT

To make improvements to the John H. Chafee Foster Care
Independence Program and related provisions.

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 “Improving Services for
3 Older Youth in Foster Care Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE JOHN H. CHAFEE FOSTER**
5 **CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM AND RE-**
6 **LATED PROVISIONS.**

7 (a) **AUTHORITY TO SERVE FORMER FOSTER YOUTH**
8 **UP TO AGE 23.**—Section 477 of the Social Security Act
9 (42 U.S.C. 677) is amended—

10 (1) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting “(or 23
11 years of age, in the case of a State with a certifi-
12 cation under subsection (b)(3)(A)(ii) to provide as-
13 sistance and services to youths who have aged out
14 of foster care and have not attained such age, in ac-
15 cordance with such subsection)” after “21 years of
16 age”;

17 (2) in subsection (b)(3)(A)—

18 (A) by inserting “(i)” before “A certifi-
19 cation”;

20 (B) by striking “children who have left fos-
21 ter care” and all that follows through the pe-
22 riod and inserting “youths who have aged out
23 of foster care and have not attained 21 years of
24 age.”; and

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

1 “(ii) If the State has elected under section
2 475(8)(B) to extend eligibility for foster care to
3 all children who have not attained 21 years of
4 age, or if the Secretary determines that the
5 State agency responsible for administering the
6 State plans under this part and part B uses
7 State funds or any other funds not provided
8 under this part to provide services and assist-
9 ance for youths who have aged out of foster
10 care that are comparable to the services and as-
11 sistance the youths would receive if the State
12 had made such an election, the certification re-
13 quired under clause (i) may provide that the
14 State will provide assistance and services to
15 youths who have aged out of foster care and
16 have not attained 23 years of age.”; and
17 (3) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking “chil-
18 dren who have left foster care” and all that follows
19 through the period and inserting “youths who have
20 aged out of foster care and have not attained 21
21 years of age (or 23 years of age, in the case of a
22 State with a certification under subparagraph (A)(i)
23 to provide assistance and services to youths who
24 have aged out of foster care and have not attained

1 such age, in accordance with subparagraph
2 (A)(ii)).”.

3 (b) AUTHORITY TO REDISTRIBUTE UNSPENT
4 FUNDS.—Section 477(d) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 677(d))
5 is amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (4), by inserting “or does not
7 expend allocated funds within the time period speci-
8 fied under section 477(d)(3)” after “provided by the
9 Secretary”; and

10 (2) by adding at the end the following:

11 “(5) REDISTRIBUTION OF UNEXPENDED
12 AMOUNTS.—

13 “(A) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—To the
14 extent that amounts paid to States under this
15 section in a fiscal year remain unexpended by
16 the States at the end of the succeeding fiscal
17 year, the Secretary may make the amounts
18 available for redistribution in the second suc-
19 ceeding fiscal year among the States that apply
20 for additional funds under this section for that
21 second succeeding fiscal year.

22 “(B) REDISTRIBUTION.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
24 shall redistribute the amounts made avail-
25 able under subparagraph (A) for a fiscal

1 year among eligible applicant States. In
2 this subparagraph, the term ‘eligible appli-
3 cant State’ means a State that has applied
4 for additional funds for the fiscal year
5 under subparagraph (A) if the Secretary
6 determines that the State will use the
7 funds for the purpose for which originally
8 allotted under this section.

9 “(ii) AMOUNT TO BE REDISTRIB-
10 UTED.—The amount to be redistributed to
11 each eligible applicant State shall be the
12 amount so made available multiplied by the
13 State foster care ratio (as defined in sub-
14 section (c)(4), except that, in such sub-
15 section, ‘all eligible applicant States (as de-
16 fined in subsection (d)(5)(B)(i))’ shall be
17 substituted for ‘all States’).

18 “(iii) TREATMENT OF REDISTRIBUTED
19 AMOUNT.—Any amount made available to
20 a State under this paragraph shall be re-
21 garded as part of the allotment of the
22 State under this section for the fiscal year
23 in which the redistribution is made.

24 “(C) TRIBES.—For purposes of this para-
25 graph, the term ‘State’ includes an Indian tribe,

1 tribal organization, or tribal consortium that re-
 2 ceives an allotment under this section.”.

3 (c) EXPANDING AND CLARIFYING THE USE OF EDU-
 4 CATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 477(i)(3) of such
 6 Act (42 U.S.C. 677(i)(3)) is amended—

7 (A) by striking “on the date” and all that
 8 follows through “23” and inserting “to remain
 9 eligible until they attain 26”; and

10 (B) by inserting “, but in no event may a
 11 youth participate in the program for more than
 12 5 years (whether or not consecutive)” before
 13 the period.

14 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section
 15 477(i)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 677(i)(1)) is
 16 amended by inserting “who have attained 14 years
 17 of age” before the period.

18 (d) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 477 of such
 19 Act (42 U.S.C. 677), as amended by subsections (a), (b),
 20 and (c) of this section, is amended—

21 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**INDE-**
 22 **PENDENCE PROGRAM**” and inserting “**PROGRAM**
 23 **FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULT-**
 24 **HOOD**”;

25 (2) in subsection (a)—

1 (A) in paragraph (1)—

2 (i) by striking “identify children who
3 are likely to remain in foster care until 18
4 years of age and to help these children
5 make the transition to self-sufficiency by
6 providing services” and inserting “support
7 all youth who have experienced foster care
8 at age 14 or older in their transition to
9 adulthood through transitional services”;

10 (ii) by inserting “and post-secondary
11 education” after “high school diploma”;
12 and

13 (iii) by striking “training in daily liv-
14 ing skills, training in budgeting and finan-
15 cial management skills” and inserting
16 “training and opportunities to practice
17 daily living skills (such as financial literacy
18 training and driving instruction)”;

19 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “who are
20 likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of
21 age receive the education, training, and services
22 necessary to obtain employment” and inserting
23 “who have experienced foster care at age 14 or
24 older achieve meaningful, permanent connec-
25 tions with a caring adult”;

1 (C) in paragraph (3), by striking “who are
2 likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of
3 age prepare for and enter postsecondary train-
4 ing and education institutions” and inserting
5 “who have experienced foster care at age 14 or
6 older engage in age or developmentally appro-
7 priate activities, positive youth development,
8 and experiential learning that reflects what
9 their peers in intact families experience”; and

10 (D) by striking paragraph (4) and redesign-
11 ating paragraphs (5) through (8) as para-
12 graphs (4) through (7);

13 (3) in subsection (b)—

14 (A) in paragraph (2)(D), by striking “ado-
15 lescents” and inserting “youth”; and

16 (B) in paragraph (3)—

17 (i) in subparagraph (D)—

18 (I) by inserting “including train-
19 ing on youth development” after “to
20 provide training”; and

21 (II) by striking “adolescents pre-
22 paring for independent living” and all
23 that follows through the period and
24 inserting “youth preparing for a suc-
25 cessful transition to adulthood and

1 making a permanent connection with
2 a caring adult.”;

3 (ii) in subparagraph (H), by striking
4 “adolescents” each place it appears and in-
5 serting “youth”; and

6 (iii) in subparagraph (K)—

7 (I) by striking “an adolescent”
8 and inserting “a youth”; and

9 (II) by striking “the adolescent”
10 each place it appears and inserting
11 “the youth”; and

12 (4) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (2)
13 and inserting the following:

14 “(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than
15 October 1, 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the
16 Committee on Ways and Means of the House of
17 Representatives and the Committee on Finance of
18 the Senate a report on the National Youth in Tran-
19 sition Database and any other databases in which
20 States report outcome measures relating to children
21 in foster care and children who have aged out of fos-
22 ter care or left foster care for kinship guardianship
23 or adoption. The report shall include the following:

24 “(A) A description of the reasons for entry
25 into foster care and of the foster care experi-

ences, such as length of stay, number of placement settings, case goal, and discharge reason of 17-year-olds who are surveyed by the National Youth in Transition Database and an analysis of the comparison of that description with the reasons for entry and foster care experiences of children of other ages who exit from foster care before attaining age 17.

“(B) A description of the characteristics of the individuals who report poor outcomes at ages 19 and 21 to the National Youth in Transition Database.

“(C) Benchmarks for determining what constitutes a poor outcome for youth who remain in or have exited from foster care and plans the executive branch will take to incorporate these benchmarks in efforts to evaluate child welfare agency performance in providing services to children transitioning from foster care.

“(D) An analysis of the association between types of placement, number of overall placements, time spent in foster care, and other factors, and outcomes at ages 19 and 21.

1 “(E) An analysis of the differences in out-
2 comes for children in and formerly in foster
3 care at age 19 and 21 among States.”.

4 (e) CLARIFYING DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED TO
5 FOSTER YOUTH LEAVING FOSTER CARE.—Section
6 475(5)(I) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 675(5)(I)) is amended
7 by inserting after “REAL ID Act of 2005” the following:
8 “, and any official documentation necessary to prove that
9 the child was previously in foster care”.

Passed the House of Representatives June 20, 2017.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.