

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3625

To amend subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 6, 2020

Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. CASEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to ensure that mental health screenings and assessments are provided to children and youth upon entry into foster care.

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 “Timely Mental Health
5 for Foster Youth Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TIMELY MENTAL HEALTH SCREENINGS AND AS-**
 2 **SESSMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
 3 **UPON ENTRY INTO FOSTER CARE.**

4 (a) STATE AND TRIBAL PLAN REQUIREMENT.—Sec-
 5 tion 422(b)(15)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
 6 622(b)(15)(A)) is amended—

7 (1) in clause (i), by inserting “and that require
 8 that an initial mental health screening of any child
 9 in foster care be completed not later than 30 days
 10 after the date the child enters into foster care and,
 11 in the case of any child in foster care for whom a
 12 mental health issue is identified in such initial
 13 screening, that a comprehensive assessment of the
 14 mental health of the child be completed not later
 15 than 60 days after the date the child enters into fos-
 16 ter care” before the semicolon; and

17 (2) in clause (ii), by striking “screenings” and
 18 inserting “such screenings and assessments”.

19 (b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section
 20 422(b)(15)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)(A)) is
 21 further amended in the matter before clause (i), by strik-
 22 ing “provides” and inserting “provide”.

23 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
 25 graph (2), the amendments made by this section
 26 shall take effect on October 1, 2020.

1 (2) DELAY PERMITTED IF STATE LEGISLATION
2 REQUIRED.—In the case of a State plan approved
3 under subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social
4 Security Act which the Secretary of Health and
5 Human Services determines requires State legisla-
6 tion (other than legislation appropriating funds) in
7 order for the plan to meet the additional require-
8 ments imposed by this section, the State plan shall
9 not be regarded as failing to comply with the re-
10 quirements of such part solely on the basis of the
11 failure of the plan to meet such additional require-
12 ments before the first day of the first calendar quar-
13 ter beginning after the close of the first regular ses-
14 sion of the State legislature that begins after the
15 date of enactment of this section. For purposes of
16 the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has
17 a 2-year legislative session, each year of such session
18 shall be deemed to be a separate regular session of
19 the State legislature.

20 **SEC. 3. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES.**

21 The Assistant Secretary for the Administration for
22 Children and Families and the Administrator for the Cen-
23 ters for Medicare & Medicaid Services jointly shall provide
24 technical assistance to States on how to comply with the
25 amendments made by section 2(a) of this Act. The Assist-

1 ant Secretary and Administrator should consult with other
 2 relevant Federal agencies on the development of such tech-
 3 nical assistance, which should take into account evidence-
 4 based best practices.

5 **SEC. 4. DATA COLLECTION.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and
 7 Human Services, in consultation with State and local pub-
 8 lic officials responsible for administering child welfare pro-
 9 grams, child welfare advocates, pediatric mental health ex-
 10 perts, and researchers shall—

11 (1) identify data elements needed to track—

12 (A) the number of children receiving an
 13 initial mental health screening required under
 14 section 422(b)(15)(A)(i) of the Social Security
 15 Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)(A)) (as amended by
 16 section 2(a) of this Act);

17 (B) whether or not such required initial
 18 mental health screening occurs within 30 days
 19 of a child's entry or re-entry into foster care;

20 (C) the number of children who receive a
 21 follow-up comprehensive assessment required
 22 under section 422(b)(15)(A)(i) of the Social Se-
 23 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)(A)) (as so
 24 amended);

1 (D) whether or not such required follow-up
2 comprehensive assessment occurs within 60
3 days of a child's entry or re-entry into foster
4 care;

5 (E) the number of children in foster care
6 who are referred for mental health services; and

7 (F) the number and characteristics of such
8 children who receive mental health services
9 after being referred for such services; and

10 (2) develop a plan to collect the information de-
11 scribed in paragraph (1) from States administering
12 a State plan under subpart 1 of part B of title IV
13 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 621 et seq.)
14 beginning with the second fiscal year that begins
15 after the date of enactment of this Act.

16 (b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 12
17 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
18 retary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the
19 Committee on Finance of the Senate and the Committee
20 on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives a
21 report detailing the plan and timetable for collecting the
22 information described in subsection (a)(1) from States.

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