

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION
SERVICES ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 21, 2016

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I request that the following extraneous materials on H.R. 5456, the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 be submitted:

CWLA, TOGETHER, MAKING CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES A NATIONAL PRIORITY
Washington, DC, June 13, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Ways and Means Committee, House of Rep-
resentatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Finance Committee, U.S. Senate,
Washington DC.

Hon. SANDER LEVIN,
Ways and Means Committee, House of Rep-
resentatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
Finance Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington
DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEM-
BER LEVIN:

DEAR CHAIRMAN HATCH AND RANKING MEM-
BER WYDEN: The Child Welfare League of
America endorses the Families First Preven-
tion Services Act. We feel that the legisla-
tion offers the important possibility of al-
lowing funds to provide vital mental health,
substance use and in-home services that
could help children stay with their own fam-
ilies. Current funding for this important part
of a continuum of needed services is lacking
and we know we must address these areas if
we are to strengthen the well-being and out-
comes for children and families that come to
the child welfare and child protection sys-
tems.

This legislation provides an important re-
authorization of the two Title IV-B programs
including an extension of the adoption-kin-
ship incentives, court improvement funds,
workforce development funds tied to case-
worker visits, and the regional partnership
grants. The bill includes some needed im-
provements to the Chaffee program in regard
to the age of eligibility.

We hope to work with the Congress and the
Administration in the implementation of
some of the more challenging aspects of the
bill to make sure that the oversight and im-
plementation of the residential care parts of
this law are carried out in the most effective
way possible. In the years ahead we also
hope to push Congress on new strategies that
can go beyond simply reallocating current
child welfare funds and instead invest in
what is truly needed and proven effective.

Thank you again for your dedication and
hard work.

Sincerely,

CHRISTINE JAMES-BROWN,
President/CEO, Child Welfare League of
America.

CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND,
Washington, DC, June 13, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, U.S. Senate.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
Chairman, Human Resources Subcommittee,
Committee on Ways and Means, House of
Representatives.

Hon. SANDY LEVIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and
Means, House of Representatives.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance, U.S.
Senate.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Ranking Member, Human Resources Sub-
committee, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives.

DEAR WAYS AND MEANS AND SENATE FI-
NANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN BRADY AND
HATCH, RANKING MEMBERS LEVIN AND WYDEN
AND HUMAN RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR-
MAN BUCHANAN AND RANKING MEMBER DOG-
GETT: One of the Children's Defense Fund
(CDF)'s first reports decades ago was Chil-
dren without Homes: An Examination of
Public Responsibility to Children in Out-of-
Home Care and we have been unrelenting
since in our advocacy for children who come
to the attention of the child welfare system
and their families. Today I offer CDF's full
support of the proposed Family First Preven-
tion Services Act. It takes historic and long
overdue steps to direct federal child welfare
dollars to improve outcomes for vulnerable
children and families. I urge you to move to-
ward a timely mark up in both the House
and Senate so these vulnerable children do
not have to wait longer for these important
reforms.

Especially significant are the redirected
funds in the Act for services and programs to
assist children at risk of foster care to re-
main safely with parents or family care-
givers. The proposal ensures quality preven-
tion and treatment services for mental
health and substance abuse problems that
bring many families to the attention of the
child welfare system. Such services and
treatment are especially critical in respond-
ing to the current heroin and opioid epi-
demic, and we applaud additional provisions
to address this crisis. The proposal also helps
strengthen families and protect children by
providing them in-home skill-based services.
At the same time, it requires states to have
a plan to track and prevent child maltreat-
ment fatalities.

The Family First Prevention Services Act
takes important steps to ensure children
who need foster care will be placed in the
least-restrictive most family-like setting ap-
propriate to their needs, and gives special at-
tention to children whose emotional or other
special needs require residential treatment.
It continues to recognize and increase sup-
ports for grandparents and other relatives
who step in to care for children when their
parents cannot; addresses the special needs
of pregnant and parenting teens and protec-
tions for their children; and offers supports
to help older youth transition from foster
care to adulthood. There is a continued im-
portant emphasis on ensuring permanent
families for children.

This new proposal builds on your Commit-
tees' work on previous bipartisan and bi-

cameral child welfare legislation. In fact, it
was 36 years ago today, June 13th, 1980 that
the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare
Act was passed by Congress and then signed
into law on June 17th. You followed that
with the Adoption and Safe Families Act,
the Foster Care Independence Act, the Fos-
tering Connections to Success and increasing
Adoptions Act, and more recently the Pre-
venting Sex Trafficking and Strengthening
Families Act, to name several, all of which
included provisions to begin to better align
federal funding with improved outcomes for
vulnerable children and their families. The
Family First Preventive Services Act now
takes important next steps.

The Children's Defense Fund looks forward
to working with all of you to make the pro-
posed improvements for children in the Fam-
ily First Prevention Services Act a reality.
Thank you for your continuing leadership on
behalf of these most vulnerable children and
their families.

Sincerely yours,

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN,
President.

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY
OF AMERICA,
Chicago, IL, June 14, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
U.S. House of Congress, Washington, DC.

Hon. SANDY LEVIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and
Means, U.S. House of Congress, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND RANKING MEM-
BER LEVIN: As a nationwide membership or-
ganization comprised of many of the most
long standing and respected child and family
organizations in the country, Children's
Home Society of America is writing in sup-
port of your efforts to promote and improve
outcomes for many of the hundreds of thou-
sands of children and youth who come to the
attention of the child welfare system each
year, including children in foster care. Over
the decades the House Ways and Means Com-
mittee, with bipartisan support, has taken
significant steps forward on behalf of our
most vulnerable children and the Family
First Prevention Services Act of 2016 con-
tinues those efforts.

Allowing funds under Title IV-E of the So-
cial Security Act, currently used primarily
for out-of-home care for children, to be used
for the first time for prevention services to
help keep children at risk of placement in
foster care safely at home with their parents
or with kin is a significant move in the right
direction. Kinship caregivers play a critical
role in protecting children temporarily while
their parents are not able to and also in en-
suring new permanent families for children
who cannot return home.

We strongly support the bill's recognition
of the importance of quality services for
these children, which are evidence-based and
trauma-informed and the importance of ac-
countability in tracking the provision of
services and their benefits for children.
States at different stages in reforming their
systems will also have help training staff for
the development and delivery of these new
services and putting in place the infrastruc-
ture needed to administer and oversee their
delivery and child outcomes.

The Family First Prevention Services Act
over time also will take important steps to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

ensure children who need to enter foster care will be placed in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs, by targeting federal dollars only on smaller family-foster homes and on other care settings for children and youth with special treatment needs or those in special circumstances, such as pregnant and parenting teens or older youth in independent living settings. A number of states already have undertaken special efforts to reduce the number of children in congregate care and to preserve group care settings for children with special treatment needs.

Children and society pay a high cost when the current systems fail to adequately address the needs of the children who come to the attention of our child welfare systems, nearly 80 percent of whom are victims of neglect. We believe that the specific changes proposed will go far in encouraging state and local child welfare systems, private providers, the courts and youth and families who have been involved in the system to work together to achieve significant change for children over the next decade.

We look forward to working with you to ensure these new child welfare finance reforms will truly benefit children who come to the attention of the child welfare system and to continue to explore additional improvements on their behalf to ensure they all have safe, permanent families. Thank you for your continuing leadership on behalf of these children.

Sincerely,

SHARON OSBORNE,
Board Chair, Children's Home
Society of America.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF WISCONSIN,
Milwaukee, WI.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
Chairman, *Human Resources Subcommittee*,
House Committee on Ways & Means, Wash-
ington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BUCHANAN: Children's Hospital of Wisconsin strongly supports the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 (H.R. 5456). We applaud your leadership on this important issue.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin (Children's) is the region's only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children. We serve children from every county in the state and are recognized as one of the leading pediatric health care centers in the United States. In addition, Children's is the largest not-for-profit, community-based child and family serving agency in Wisconsin. Through our Community Services work, we provide a continuum of care to more than 15,000 children and families annually. This includes family preservation and support, child and family counseling, child welfare, child advocacy and protection, and foster care and adoption services.

We strongly support the Family First Prevention Services Act that that would allow funds under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to be used for the first time for evidence-based prevention services to help keep children at risk of placement in foster care safely at home with their parents or with kin. The legislation represents a significant and meaningful shift in child welfare policy by prioritizing up-front, evidence-based services to keep families together. We know from experience and empirical research that this is important for the healthy development of children.

The bill also makes significant advancements to integrate interventions and measures focused on child well-being into the child welfare system. Children's believes that prioritizing and providing accountability for child well-being, in addition to

safety and permanency, is critical to achieving better outcomes for children and society and positioning children to thrive into adulthood.

Children's is committed to improving the health and well-being of children and families. We believe the Family First Prevention Services Act will enable the child welfare system to better serve our most vulnerable children and families.

Sincerely,

AMY HERBST,
Vice President, *Child Well-Being*,
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

FIRST FOCUS
CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, *Committee on Ways and Means*,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
Chairman, *Committee on Finance*,
U.S. Senate, Washington DC.

Hon. VERN BUCHANAN,
Chairman, *Human Resources Subcommittee*,
Committee on Ways and Means, House of
Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. SANDER LEVIN,
Ranking Member, *Committee on Ways and
Means*, House of Representatives, Wash-
ington, DC.

Hon. RON WYDEN,
Ranking Member, *Committee on Finance*, U.S.
Senate, Washington DC.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Ranking Member, *Human Resources Sub-
committee*, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY AND HATCH, RANK-
ING MEMBERS LEVIN AND WYDEN, CHAIRMAN
BUCHANAN AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGETT:
On behalf of the First Focus Campaign for
Children (FFCC), a bipartisan organization
committed to making children and their
families a priority in federal policy and
budget decisions, I am writing in strong sup-
port of H.R. 5456, the Family First Preven-
tion Services Act of 2016. This bill that
makes important policy changes in federal
child welfare spending that better support
the needs of vulnerable children and fami-
lies.

Currently, there are 415,000 children in the foster care system, a number that has increased by 3.5 percent from 2014. Nearly 31 percent of children placed in foster care were removed due to parental alcohol or drug use, and in some states, the percentage of removal due to parental substance abuse is closer to 60 percent. In addition, 57,000 children in foster care live in group homes or congregate care settings. These children and youth do not have a clinical need to be in such a setting, and should be with families who can provide love and support.

The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016 contains many important provisions that address these poor statistics and will make a significant impact in strengthening and keeping families together. For the first time states will be able to use federal dollars from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to provide time-limited, evidence-based services to families. The services are aimed to help prevent children from entering the foster care system by allowing federal reimbursement to families for mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and in-home parent skill-based programs. In addition, the bill incentivizes states to ensure that children are placed in family-based settings by only allowing federal reimbursement after an assessment has occurred and it has been determined that the child should be placed in a quality residential treatment program.

The legislation also includes a number of other provisions aimed to reform and

strengthen the child welfare system including the extension of the Title IV-B program, improving supports for youth transitioning to adulthood, establishing model foster care licensing standards, and calling for a GAO review to examine compliance of states in reinvesting savings from the federal adoption assistance reimbursement for special needs kids.

We look forward to working with you to ensure these new child welfare finance reforms will truly benefit children who come to the attention of the child welfare system and to continue to explore additional improvements on their behalf to ensure they all have safe, permanent families. Thank you for your continued leadership on behalf of these children.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,
President.

CELEBRATING THE EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MRS. SYLVIA CRIER

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mrs. Sylvia Crier on receiving the annual New Orleans Excellence in Teaching Award from New Schools for New Orleans. The Excellence in Teaching Award is given to a teacher that goes above and beyond for their students and who has a powerful impact on their school community.

Mrs. Crier began her teaching career more than 51 years ago when New Orleans public schools were newly integrated. Prior to starting her teaching career, Mrs. Crier received her Bachelor's of Science in English from Tuskegee University and moved to New Orleans shortly after—and we're glad she did.

At the young age of 75, Mrs. Crier has taught English, U.S. History, civics and business to generations of New Orleans students. Currently, the students of McDonough 35 High are lucky enough to have a teacher who is invested in not only their educational achievement but also their professional and personal development.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the Crier family in celebrating Mrs. Crier's dedication to her students and receiving this achievement.

RECOGNIZING W. MARK DONALD, DMD, MAGD AS THE 52ND PRES- IDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF GEN- ERAL DENTISTRY

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the occasion of the 2016 Academy of General Dentistry's Annual meeting in Boston, Massachusetts to commend and congratulate W. Mark Donald, DMD, MAGD, for his service as the 52nd President of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) 2015–2016.

A Louisville, Mississippi native, Dr. Donald is a graduate of Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi School of