



Date: December 5, 2017

To: Members of the Coalition of Residential Excellence

From: Don Forrester, Executive Director

Subject: November 2017 Monthly Report

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- **Legislative**



Don Forrester, Claire Sanderson, Senator Cornyn

I visited with Congress Fleischmann on November 8, 2017 concerning his proposed amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. The intent of the proposed legislation is to modernize the houseparent exemption to certain wage and hour requirements and for other purposes.

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Prior to the visit, I reached out to CORE members and potential CORE members to get some sense of their support for the proposed legislation. In doing so, I asked for the following information:

- 1) Do you provide a live-in houseparent model and what is the staffing plan?*
- 2) Are your houseparent staff currently compensated at a set rate or are they paid on an hourly basis?*
- 3) What is the entry level compensation rate for houseparent staff?*
- 4) Would you support the need for legislation that exempts houseparent staff from wage and hour requirements?*

When I met with Congressman Fleischmann and Will Strother, his Legislative Assistant, I shared information about the Coalition of Residential Excellence and communicated that I had surveyed our membership and there is universal support for his proposed Legislation.

Congressman Fleishmann said that the bill has been filed and assigned to the Committee on Education and Workforce. The committee has not yet voted it out of committee. Reportedly, the committee isn't verbalizing or expressing concerns, they just want to exercise due-diligence by looking at it more carefully.

Congressman Fleischmann suggested that if the Coalition of Residential Excellence has members with ties to members of the Education and Workforce Committee, it would be helpful to encourage them to move favorably. Reportedly, Bethel Bible Village in Hixon, Tennessee, is the agency for which Congressman Fleischmann initially crafted the proposed legislation.

There are 40 members of the Education and Workforce Committee. They include:

Rep. Virginia Foxx, North Carolina (Chair)

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Rep. Joe Wilson, South Carolina (Vice Chair)  
Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (Ranking Member) Virginia  
Rep. Susan A. Davis, California  
Rep. Duncan Hunter, California  
Rep. Raul M. Grijalva, Arizona  
Rep. David P. Roe, Tennessee  
Rep. Joe Courtney, Connecticut  
Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson, Pennsylvania  
Rep. Marcia Fudge, Ohio  
Rep. Tim Walberg, Michigan  
Rep. Jared Polis, Colorado  
Rep. Brett Guthrie, Kentucky  
Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, Northern Mariana Islands  
Rep. Todd Rokita, Indiana  
Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, Florida  
Rep. Lou Barletta, Pennsylvania  
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Oregon  
Rep. Luke Messer, Indiana  
Rep. Mark Takano, California  
Rep. Bradley Byrne, Alabama  
Rep. Alma S. Adams, North Carolina  
Rep. David Brat, Virginia  
Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, California  
Rep. Glenn Grothman, Wisconsin  
Rep. Donald Norcross, New Jersey  
Rep. Elise Stefanik, New York  
Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, Delaware  
Rep. Jason Lewis, Minnesota  
Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, Illinois  
Rep. Francis Rooney, Florida  
Rep. Carol Shea-Porter, New Hampshire

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Rep. Paul Mitchell, Michigan

Rep. Adriano Espaillat, New York

Rep. Tom Garrett, Jr., Virginia

Rep. Lloyd K. Smucker, Pennsylvania

Rep. A. Drew Ferguson, IV, Georgia

Rep. Ron Estes, Kansas

Rep. Karen Handel, Georgia

I left the meeting with Congressman Fleischmann with the sense that he is committed to seeing this bill through to subsequent passage.

In addition, I met with Senator Cornyn and Claire Sanderson, Legislative Assistant. I have talked to Claire several times in recent months and visited with her in person twice to discuss the status of FFPSA of 2017. Claire made arrangements for me to be invited to the Texas Thursday Coffee hosted by Senator Cornyn at the Capitol Visitors Center on November 9, 2017.

Senator Cornyn serves on the Senate Finance Committee along with Senator Orrin Hatch, Chairman, who has proposed several pieces of Legislation along with Senator Ron Wyden who serves on the Senate Budget Committee. Both Senator Hatch and Senator Wyden seem to favor the legislative agenda set forth for consideration by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Members of the Senate Finance Committee include:

- Orrin Hatch, Utah, Chairman.
- Chuck Grassley, Iowa.
- Mike Crapo, Idaho.
- Pat Roberts, Kansas.
- Mike Enzi, Wyoming.
- John Cornyn, Texas.
- John Thune, South Dakota.

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- Richard Burr, North Carolina.

- **Coalition of Residential Education - Membership Expansion**

A lot of effort this month was invested in attempting to orchestrate new members for CORE. In my communication with potential member agencies, I stated in part: "We need you and other like-minded professionals to join with us in advocating for the best interests of serving children and families from hard places. I am convinced that: 'Two are better one because they have a good return for their labor'. Your joining with us would assist in making us both stronger and more effective".

I am pleased to report that CORE has received two completed applications for first time membership along with their new member assessment questionnaire forms. I've also been in communication with two other agencies that are in the process of completing the required information. I've heard from a board member that he has also been told a membership application for another agency is in process of being completed.

I am very encouraged by the number of folks who are expressing an interest in CORE membership. It is crucial that the residential care industry have a united voice if we are to withstand the strategic plan in place by those who are intent of eliminating the kind of services our member agencies provide.

We are currently in the process of attempting to ascertain the number of agencies across the nation that might potentially fit into CORE membership.

- **Requests for Information**

During the month, I sent out two different requests to CORE member

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agencies regarding capacity or optimal number of children in care at any one time and a survey regarding the associated costs for program areas, etc.

In addition a CORE Query related to the process of documenting visits of students was solicited and subsequently released.

- **Summary**

I am optimistic about what 2018 has in store for the Coalition of Residential Excellence. No doubt it will be filled with both opportunity and challenge. I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve with you.

Thanks

Don