CORE
COALITION OF RESIDENTIAL EXCELLENCE

Executive Director's Report
December 2019

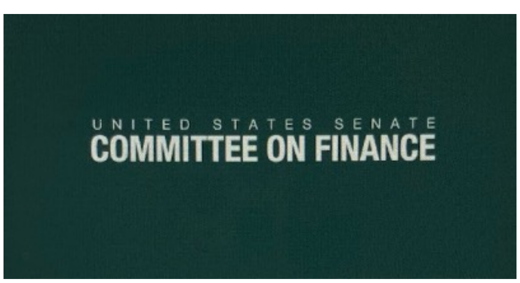
LEGISLATION

Reminiscent of the way FFPSA initially came our way in February 2018, the first legislative modification or additional provisions related to transition of the Act came our way in exactly the same fashion.

As you probably recall, the Family First Prevention Services Act (H.R. 5456 (Family First)) was signed into law as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act on February 9, 2018, as Public Law 115-123. Family First amended Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the Social Security Act to child welfare programs and policy.

On, December 17, 2019, the Families First Transaction Act [S.1376] was added to the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020. The bill passed in the House and was sent to the Senate for approval.

Initially, the **Families First Transaction Act** was introduced by Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich) and Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio). The act identifies funding levels by States to assist with implementation of FFPSA. Reportedly, it also offers assistance to States whose IV-E waiver expired on October 1, 2019. In addition, it also modifies the timeline for provisions associated to ratings for evidence based practices tied to the use of IV-E funds.



Chairman's l Newsroom l The United States Senate Committee on Finance

DECEMBER 19, 2019

Bipartisan Legislation Boosting Support for Foster Care System Passes Congress

Washington - Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), along with House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard E. Neal (D-Mass.) and Ranking Member Kevin Brady (R-Texas), praised the inclusion of the Family First Transition Act in the end-of-year funding legislation that passed the Senate today and heads to the President's desk for signature. The legislation was introduced in the Senate by Senators Grassley and Wyden, and in the House by Representatives Danny K. Davis (D-Ill.) and Jackie Walorski (R-Ind.).

Reportedly, the *Family First Transition Act* passed by Congress this week builds on the previous law by:

- Providing one-time funding to all states to help implement the FFPSA;
- Providing insurance to states with child welfare demonstration projects that ended on October 1, 2019, guaranteeing they will not face a large financial shortfall as they transition to the new law; and
- Phasing in the FFPSA requirement that 50 percent of spending on foster care prevention be on programs meeting the highest level of evidence ("well supported"), allowing states to receive reimbursement for a broader range of evidence-based programs in early years while the Department of Health and Human Services expands its list of qualifying programs.

A summary of the bill can be found **HERE**.

The PDF of the Family First Act (S.2777) can be found here:
https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/s2777/BILLS-116s2777is.pdf

Note from the Executive Director"

Frankly, I was not surprised that S.2777 was selected over the other two pieces of proposed legislation related to providing financial help with Family First transition. For starters, it offers a temporary suspension of some of the funding requirements associated to FFPSA related to evidence based practice. HHS had already developed and implemented policies that did not meet the letter of the law. The provisions of S.2777 temporarily set aside some of those requirements that were virtually impossible to meet at the current time.

The new law provides “enhanced funding for transaction activities related to FFPSA. **The enhanced funding totals $500,000,000 for fiscal year 2020**, which shall remain available through fiscal year 2021. In addition, the legislation also provides additional funding for states with expiring demonstration projects.

Estimated State Allocations Under Family First Transition Act (1)

State	Amounts	State	Amounts
Alabama	8.3 Million	Montana	1.7 Million
Alaska	1.0 Million	Nebraska	3.0 Million
Arizona	12.4 Million	Nevada	4.8 Million
Arkansas	5.4 Million	New Hampshire	1.5 Million
California	52.8 Million	New Jersey	9.5 Million
Colorado	7.7 Million	New Mexico	3.8 Million
Connecticut	3.0 Million	New York	12.4 Million
Delaware	1.4 Million	North Carolina	17.1 Million
District of Columbia	0.6 Million	North Dakota	1.0 Million
Florida	28.9 Million	Ohio	18.2 Million
Georgia	18.6 Million	Oklahoma	6.5 Million
Hawaii	2.0 Million	Oregon	6.2 Million
Idaho	3.4 Million	Pennsylvania	16.8 Million
Illinois	17.9 Million	Rhode Island	1.4 Million
Indiana	11.6 Million	South Carolina	8.6 Million
Iowa	5.0 Million	South Dakota	1.5 Million
Kansas	4.7 Million	Tennessee	10.8 Million
Kentucky	7.8 Million	Texas	47.3 Million
Louisiana	7.7 Million	Utah	10.8 Million
Maine	2.0 Million	Vermont	0.9 Million
Maryland	7.1 Million	Virginia	11.0 Million
Massachusetts	6.7 Million	Washington	9.7 Million
Michigan	15.8 Million	West Virginia	3.0 Million

Minnesota	**7.8 Million**	**Wisconsin**	**8.7 Million**
Mississippi	**5.8 Million**	**Wyoming**	**0.8 Million**
Missouri	**9.9 Million**		

1 State allocations on this table are estimates calculated by the Congressional Research Service based on most recent available data and the formula specified in the legislation. Official allocations would be calculated by the Department of Health and Human Services after enactment.
2 These amounts would be in addition to any funding received under the separate funding certainty provision for jurisdictions whose 1130 waivers are ending September 30.

Source: Congressional Research Service

Full FFPSA Compliance Not Yet Met

Despite the rhetoric that FFPSA is the most comprehensive child welfare reform in four decades designed to keep children with their own families, the rhetoric has yet to live up to reality. Perhaps, only time will tell.

Currently, over 50% of states are continuing to operate under a waiver exempting them from the residential limitations imposed by FFPSA. Those limitations exclude use of Title IV-E resources to help with the cost of residential care of children not needing treatment services.

As the year, 2021 approaches [last year of residential FFPSA waiver], the need for additional modifications to FFPSA may become evident. As that time approaches, the need for CORE member agencies to stand in solidarity by identifying the need for additional changes could be the impetus needed to garner legislative support.

Caring Homes and Improved Lives for Dependents (CHILD) Act [H.R. 4839]

Rep. Meadows filed H.R. 4839 on October 23, 2019. The bill makes provision for a cottage home to be considered as a least restrictive setting for children over the age of 6 and comparable with foster care. The bill has been referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. No co-sponsors are yet noted on the pending legislation.

COALITION OF RESIDENTIAL EXCELLENCE
M E M B E R S H I P   R E N E WAL

2020 CORE Membership renewal applications and dues are payable on or before January 31, 2020.

In addition, there is strength in numbers. A chord of three stands is not easily broken. The man of wisdom stated: “Two are better than one. They have a good reward for their labor”. It is imperative that residential programs serving children and families from hard places stand together in solidarity as we face challenges for the future.

Consequently, the Coalition of Residential Excellence is open to expanding our membership to include other residential agencies providing exemplary care for children.

New Members Needed To Expand and Strengthen the CORE Membership

Residential agencies providing services that represent a good fit for CORE membership include those with the following characteristics:

1) EDUCATION FOCUSED - A quality education coupled with relationships with caring adults who nurture the children and youth physically, academically, emotionally, and spiritually is one of the cornerstones of CORE agencies.

2) EMPOWERING - Residents are provided many opportunities to identify and strengthen their skills, abilities and interests through participation in the arts, music, sports, recreational activities and programs to promote character and social skills development.

3) FAMILY FRIENDLY - Family members are encouraged to be active participants in the care of their child and to maintain regular contact with their child through weekend and summer visits, and attendance at school and extracurricular events. Keeping siblings together and maintain family connections that are safe and appropriate is a priority.

4) FAMILY-LIKE SETTING - Most children resides in single-family homes with two parents in a residential community designed for children.

5) PREVENTATIVE - CORE agencies invest in the futures of children who would otherwise be homeless, out of school, living in dangerous neighborhoods or subjected to multiple failed placements with relatives of other substitute care providers.

6) LIFETIME CONNECTIONS - Children from CORE agencies maintain strong and lasting connections to home parents, teachers, administrators and other youth and they have a place to come home to for the rest of their lives.

7) TRAUMA INFORMED - Residents are cared for by skilled professional parents and ` staff trained in working with children and youth impacted by traumatic life circumstances.

If your agency is considering Membership in the Coalition of Residential Excellence, there has never been a better time to join. The professionalism and enthusiasm of the current membership has never been greater. In addition, the same is true for the challenges we face. Together - we can do this!