



As the January calendar yielded to February, Congressional interests at the federal level seemed primarily focused on two issues: (1) responding to President Biden's request for another COVID Stimulus package and (2) issues around impeachment of the former President.

Consequently, I don't have a lot of news to report regarding issues that primarily impact CORE members.

As you are aware, H.R. 8443 [Cottage Homes To Improve Lives for Dependents (CHILD) Act] did not make it past the January 3, 2021 deadline. CORE members have been in contact with Rep. Dunn's office as well as with folks involved in the legislative process to articulate the increased need for this type of legislation.

As we have shared earlier, the pandemic is exacerbating the capacity crisis in foster care. As early as June 2020 (with release of the CHAMPS Report), a review of 42 states noted that for most states "Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Plans" did not include a comprehensive approach to creation of a sustainable agency wide recruitment and retention infrastructure.

One might question the efficacy of a child welfare system where children in need of protection find themselves left in harms way or sleeping in workers offices or hotel rooms because foster homes are unavailable and cottage home care is not a consideration because federal law primarily prohibits the use of IV-E dollars for reimbursement of care. Of course, 27 states are currently operating on a waiver from that legislation until September 30, 2021. When the waiver expires, the foster home capacity crisis will assuredly become more acute.

Interestingly, the majority of faith-based children's home are not dependent on state or federal funds, but are currently seen by some states as not a consideration because cottage home care has been removed from the continuum of care for which federal dollars can be used.

In an attempt to compensate, some state's child welfare practices are choosing to separate sibling groups and place them in separate foster homes. Other states report-

edly are placing more than six children in a foster home in order to compensate for the capacity crisis.

Even more tragically, children continue to die after being left in homes where multiple child abuse investigation visits have been made by both law enforcement and child welfare workers.

I will notify you once another bill has been introduced that makes provision for cottage home care. A unified response on the part of our membership can make a significant difference.

Interestingly, our CORE membership is located in areas that have representation by 40% of those serving in Congress.

## **BAD NEWS / GOOD NEWS**

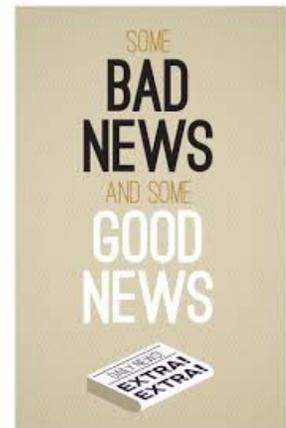
Disappointingly, the continuing threat of COVID - 19 appears to be a probable factor of great concern over the next several months. Consequently, the April 20-23, 2021 date for the 2021 CORE National Conference has been determined unfeasible.

The CORE board met via Zoom on January 27th and made the decision for another postponement. Who would have thought the “*Fifteen Days To Slow The Spread*” mandated last March would still be an unsolved and life threatening issue the following year?

The CORE board briefly discussed, but ruled out, attempting to restructure the conference to a virtual event since interpersonal relationships and opportunities to exchange ideas with others is one of the primary strengths of the conference.

Under the category of **Good News**, Gary Urwiler, Executive Director of Mooseheart Child City & School has graciously agreed to host the 2021 CORE National Conference conference on October 12-14, 2021.

**In addition, it is our plan to host a virtual forum of sorts on a topic of mutual interest in April. Information regarding the date and topic will be forthcoming in the near future.**





If you have not yet remitted your CORE membership dues for 2021, please do so this month. If you need an official invoice for the dues, contact [don@CORE-DC.org](mailto:don@CORE-DC.org) (202) 770-9490

