year-round job, making them particularly vulnerable.

When a household falls into poverty, children are exposed to increased parental distress, inadequate childcare arrangements, and poor nutrition. In past recessions, it took many years for employment and incomes to rebound. Low-income families rebound more slowly than others.

Public benefits such as TANF help families bridge the gaps in difficult economic times and are critical in reducing the effects of a recession. Cutting these supports will hurt child and family wellbeing and damage the Texas economy by taking money out of the private economy for critical local businesses such as grocery stores and medical providers.

Although TANF is not perfect, I believe that it is an essential part of the safety net for very low-income families with children. These benefits do not provide families with the ability to live a lavish life style, they do provide a life line to families at a critical time in their lives, such as periods of unemployment or disability, or when a newborn joins a family. The goal of TANF is to ensure families are not dependent on safety net and to help families in need to regain their balance, when a hard time causes them to lose their balance.

TANF provides access to paths out of pov¬erty through services such as job training or counseling for mental health issues. State also uses the block grants for a wide range of work supports, including child care and transportation. For these reasons I support H.R. 2943.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Davis), to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2943.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed. A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION ACT
Mr. Davis of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2983) to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to extend the child and family services program through fiscal year 2016, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2983

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘‘Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act’’.

TITLE I—EXTENSION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAMS

SEC. 101. STEPHANIE TURBS JONES CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—Section 425 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 625) is amended by striking ‘‘2007 through 2011’’ and inserting ‘‘2012 through 2016’’.

(b) MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) RESPONSE TO EMOTIONAL TRAUMA.—Section 422(b)(15)(A)(ii) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting ‘‘, including emotional trauma associated with a child’s maltreatment and removal from home’’ before the semicolon.

(2) PROHIBITION ON USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATIONS.—Section 422(b)(15)(A)(v) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)(A)(v)) is amended by inserting ‘‘, including protocols for the appropriate use and monitoring of psychotropic medications’’ before the semicolon.

(3) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF VERY YOUNG CHILDREN.—Section 422(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking ‘‘and’’ at the end of paragraph (16);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (17) and inserting ‘‘; and’’; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

‘‘(18) includes a description of the activities that the State has undertaken to reduce the length of time children who have not attained 5 years of age are without a permanent family, and the activities the State undertakes to address the developmental needs of such children who receive benefits or services under this part or part B.’’;

(4) DATA SOURCES FOR CHILD DEATH REPORTING.—Section 422(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622(b)), as amended by paragraph (3) of this subsection, is amended—

(A) by striking ‘‘and’’ at the end of paragraph (17);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraphs (18) and (19) and inserting ‘‘; and’’; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

‘‘(19) contain a description of the sources used to compile information on child maltreatment deaths required by Federal law to be reported by the State agency referred to in paragraph (1), and to the extent that the compilation does not include information on such deaths from the State vital statistics department, child death review teams, law enforcement agencies, or offices of medical examiners or coroners, the State shall describe why the information is not so included and how the State will include the informa-

tion.’’;

(c) CHILD VISITATION BY CASEWORKERS.—Section 424 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 624) is amended by section 706 of the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, and inserting the following:

‘‘(f)(1)(A) Each State shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care under the responsibility of the State in a fiscal year is not less than 90 percent (or, in the case of fiscal year 2015 or thereafter, 95 percent) of the total number of such visits that would occur during the fiscal year if each such child were so visited on average every month while in such care.

‘‘(B) If the Secretary determines that a State has failed to comply with subparagraph (A) for a fiscal year, the rate at which the State fell short, as described in clause (i), is not less than 10 and less than 20; or

‘‘(iii) 5, if the number of full percentage points by which the State fell short, as described in clause (i), is not less than 20.

(2) FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES.—Section 432(a)(7)(B) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(7)(B)) is amended by—

(A) by striking paragraphs (5) and (6) and inserting the following:

‘‘(5) To promote the safety and well-being of children and families.

‘‘(6) To increase the strength and stability of families (including adoptive, foster, and extended families).

‘‘(7) To increase parents’ confidence and competence in their parenting abilities.

‘‘(8) To afford children a safe, stable, and supportive family environment.

‘‘(9) To strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages.

‘‘(10) To enhance child development, including through mentoring (as defined in section 439(b)(2)).’’;

(3) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES.—Section 431(a)(7) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(7)) is amended by redesignating clause (vi) as clause (vii) and inserting after clause (v) the following:

‘‘(vi) Peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers.

‘‘(vii) Services and activities designed to facilitate access to and visitation of children by parents and siblings.’’;

(4) UNIFORM DEFINITIONS OF INDIAN TRIBE AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—Section 431(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(5) and (6)) is amended by—

(A) by striking paragraphs (5) and (6) and inserting the following:

‘‘(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’ has the meaning given to the term ‘tribal organization’ has the meaning given to the term in section 432(c).’’;
ty, permanency, and well-being of foster children and on activities designed to increase re-
tention, recruitment, and training of case-
workers,” and

(1) REALLOCATION OF REGIONAL PART-
nership Grants to Assist Children Affected by
PARENTAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE.—

(1) EXTENSION PROGRAM.—Section

(2) REVISIONS.—Section 437(f) of such
Act (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)) is amended—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “METHAMPHETAMINE OR OTHER”;

(B) in each of paragraphs (1), (4)(A), (7)(A)(ii), and (9)(B)(iii), by striking “methamphetamine or other”;

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) REQUIRED MINIMUM PERIOD OF AP-
PROVAL.—In general.—A grant shall be awarded under this subsection for a period of not less than 18 months.

(ii) of the Act related to concurrent planning;”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by adding “and” at the end of clause (ii); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) to increase and improve engagement of the entire family in court processes relating to child welfare, family preservation, family reunification, and adoption;”;

and

(2) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by inserting “(A)” after “(4)”;

(B) by striking the period and inserting “and”;

and

(C) by adding after and below the end the fol-
lowing:

“(B) to increase and improve engagement of the entire family in court processes relating to child welfare, family preservation, family reunification, and adoption;”;

(b) SINGLE GRANT APPLICATION.—Section
437(b)(2)(k) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629h(b)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

(2) GRANT APPLICATION.—Pursuant to the requiring paragraph of subsection (1) of this subsection, a highest State court desiring a grant under this section shall submit a single application to the Secretary that specifies whether the application is for a grant for—

“A” the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a); or

“B” the purpose described in subsection (a)(3);

“C” the purpose described in subsection (a)(3); or

“D” the purposes referred to in or more (specifically identified) of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of this paragraph.

(1) AMOUNT DESCRIBED.—The amount described in this paragraph for any fiscal year with respect to the purpose or purposes referred to in a subparagraph of subsection (b)(2) that refers to 1 or more grant purposes for which an application of a highest State court is ap-
plicable under this subsection shall be entitled to payment, for each of fiscal years 2012 through fiscal year 2016, from the amount allocated under paragraph (3) of this subsection for grants for the purpose or purposes, of an amount equal to $85,000 plus the amount described in paragraph (2) of this subsection with respect to the purpose or purposes.
“(ii) $10,000,000 for grants for the purpose described in subsection (a)(4); and

“(iv) $1,000,000 for grants to be awarded on a competitive basis among the highest courts of Indian tribes for grants to improve Indian court programs that—

“(I) are operating a program under part E, in accordance with section 479B;

“(II) are seeking to operate a program under part E, and have received an implementation grant under section 476; or

“(III) has a court responsible for proceedings related to foster care or adoption.

“(b) Designation.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget, and considering State perspectives, shall, by rule, designate standard data elements for any category of information required to be reported under this part.

“(2) Data Elements Must Be Nonproprietary and Interoperable.—The standard data elements designated under paragraph (1) shall, to the extent practicable, be nonproprietary and interoperable.

“(c) Other Requirements.—In designating standard data elements under this subsection, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate existing nonproprietary standards, such as the eXtensible Business Reporting Language.

“(d) Effective Date.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2012, and shall apply with respect to information required to be reported on or after such date.

“SEC. 106. PROVISIONS RELATING TO FOSTER CARE OR ADOPTION.

“(a) Educational Stability for Each Foster Placement.—Section 475(a)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 679b(a)(2)(B)) is amended—

“(I) by striking “educational stability” and inserting “the educational stability”;

“(II) by striking “place of attendance” and inserting “place of residence”;

“(III) by striking “is eligible for” and inserting “may be eligible for”;

“(IV) by striking “seeking to operate a program under part E” and inserting “seeking to operate a program under part E of title IV”;

“(V) by striking “with respect to” and inserting “with respect to”;

“(VI) by striking “the Secretary” and inserting “Secretary”;

“(VII) by striking “State” and inserting “the State”;

“(VIII) by striking “(A)” and “and”, and inserting “(A)”;

“(IX) by striking “(B)” and “and”, and inserting “(B)”;

“(X) by striking “(C)” and “and”, and inserting “(C)”;

“(b) Foster Youth ID Theft.—Section 475(a)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 679b(a)(2)(B)) is amended—

“(I) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (G); and

“(II) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (H) and inserting “; and”;

“(c) Description of Adoption Spending.—Section 475(a)(8)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 679b(a)(8)(B)) is amended—

“(I) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (A); and

“(II) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C) and inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) the total number of visits made by case-workers to a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State during a fiscal year as a percentage of the total number of the visits that would occur during the fiscal year if each child in foster care were checked once every month while in such care; and”;

“SEC. 107. EFFECTIVE DATE.

“(a) In General.—Except as otherwise provided in this title, this title and the amendments made by this title shall take effect on October 1, 2011, and shall apply to payments under parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, without regard to whether regulations to implement the amendments are promulgated by such date.

“(b) Delayed Permit if State Legislation Required.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) is required in order for a State plan developed pursuant to this section to be authorized in any fiscal year, the Secretary shall take such action as is necessary to provide the State with a reasonable amount of time to enact the legislation and to implement the plan. In the absence of such legislation, the Secretary shall make the payments required by this title to the State as if the State submitted a plan that is acceptable to the Secretary and the Secretary approved the plan.

“(c) Demonstrate Implemented or Planned Child Welfare Program Improvement Policies.—

“(i) In General.—The State shall demonstrate that the State has implemented, or plans to implement within 3 years of the date on which the State submits its application to conduct the demonstration project, policies to improve the safety and well-being of children, youth, and families in their homes and communities, including tribal communities, and to improve the outcomes for infants, children, youth, and families in their homes and communities, including tribal communities.

“(ii) Priorities.—In conducting the demonstration project, the State shall give priority to policies intended to improve the safety and well-being of children, youth, and families in their homes and communities, including tribal communities.

“(d) Prior to Implementation.—For purposes of the requirement described in clause (i), at least 2 of the child welfare program improvement policies to be implemented by the State shall be policies that the State has not previously implemented as of the date on which the State submits its application to conduct the demonstration project.

“(e) Implementation Review.—The Secretary shall review the implementation of the demonstration project and, if the Secretary determines that the State’s policies are not being implemented in accordance with the plan submitted by the State, the Secretary shall take such action as is necessary to provide the State with a reasonable amount of time to implement the policies described in paragraph (d).
(1) The inclusion in the State plan under section 471 of a description of State procedures for—
   (i) ensuring that youth in foster care who have attained age 16 are enrolled in high school and are engaged in extracurricular activities; (ii) including during the development of the transition plans required under paragraphs (1)(D) and (3)(H) of section 473, that explore whether the youth wishes to reconnect with their biological family, including parents, grandparents, and siblings, and, if so, what skills and strategies the youth will need to successfully and safely reconnect with those family members; (iii) providing appropriate guidance and services to youth whom affirm an intent to reconnect with biological family members on how to successfully and safely make such reconnections; and
   (iv) making, when appropriate, efforts to include biological family members in such reconnection efforts.

(2) The establishment of one or more of the following programs designed to prevent children, youth, and children from entering foster care or to provide permanency for infants, children, and youth in foster care:
   (i) An intensive family finding program.
   (ii) A kinship navigator program.
   (iii) A family counseling program, such as a family group decision-making program, and which may include in-home peer support for families.
   (iv) A comprehensive family-based substance abuse treatment program.

A program under which special efforts are made to identify and prevent domestic violence that endangers infants, children, and youth and puts them at risk of entering foster care.

(3) A mentoring program.

(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—
   (A) the term 'youth' means, with respect to a State, an individual who has attained age 12 but has not attained the age at which an individual is no longer considered to be a child under the State plans under parts B and E of title IV.
   (B) the term 'long-term therapeutic family treatment center' means a State licensed or certified program that enables parents and their children to live together in a safe environment for a period of not less than 6 months and provides, on site or by referral, substance abuse treatment services, children's early intervention services, and services for infants and young children, including mental health services, nursery and preschool, parenting skills training, pediatric care, prenatal care, sexual abuse therapy, re-lapse prevention, and job or vocational training or classes leading to a secondary school diploma or a certificate of general equivalence.
   (C) the term 'out-of-home placement' includes foster care, kinship guardianship, adoption, group home, and residential care.
   (D) the term 'youth' includes biological family members in such reconnection efforts.

SEC. 301. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Davis) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Kesler) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.
Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky? There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2883, the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, a bill that continues a tradition of bipartisan leadership in crafting child welfare legislation.

The bill we’re considering today reauthorizes two important child welfare programs, incorporating a series of improvements developed during hearings held by the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources over the past few months.

In addition to continuing and making improvements to two major child welfare programs, the bill also reauthorizes the Council on Child Welfare, which provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services to approve child welfare waivers during the next 3 years. Past waivers have allowed States to test new and better ways of helping children at risk of abuse and neglect.

Earlier this year, the House unanimously passed legislation renewing this authority, but the Senate has not followed suit.

This bill, which our colleagues in the Senate also support and which was favorably reported by the Senate Finance Committee yesterday, will allow innovation to continue and may yield information to improve child welfare programs in the future. The bill will also establish a process to create needed data standards in child welfare programs. This language is a first step toward improving collaboration between social service programs.

We have often heard in hearings that States and programs within States have difficulty coordinating services because of competing interests, and that this lack of coordination increases costs and decreases effectiveness. This bill directs the Secretary of HHS to work with the States to establish national data standards so that all State child welfare programs are speaking the same language.

To show the wide support for this bill, Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert letters of support into the record from the following organizations: The National Conference of State Legislatures; the American Public Human Services Association; the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators; the American Institute of CPAs; the American Humane Association; the North American Council on Adoptable Children; Voice for Adoption; the Association on American Indian Affairs; the National Indian Child Welfare Association; Association of Children’s Treatment Centers; First Focus Campaign for Children; Zero to Three (The National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families); the National Foster Care Coalition; the Child Welfare League of America; the Children’s Defense Fund; the Center for the Study of Social Policy; and the Public Children Services Association of Ohio.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE COALITION, Washington, DC, September 13, 2011. Hon. MAX BAUCUS, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. GEOFF DAVIS, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

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

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Human Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BAUCUS, RANKING MEMBER HATCH, CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGETT: The National Foster Care Coalition extends its support to the reforms made through the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011. In these challenging times we still believe important reforms can be made with the child welfare system. Waiver provisions provide an opportunity for states to strengthen their child welfare systems in some very important ways.

We appreciate and support the inclusion of important provisions we highlighted including: Greater attention placed on the care and the development of infants and toddlers who come into contact with the child welfare system. Continuation of the substance abuse grants and that these grants will have a broader substance abuse focus. Funding for child welfare workforce development and the accompanying requirements on monthly visits to children in foster care. Additional clarification on the state tracking and reporting of the adoption maintenance-of-effort provisions as enacted by PL 110-351 will provide a greater assurance that more funds are re-invested into state child welfare systems. Clarification of the education protection for children in foster care. Provisions that will help address issue young people in foster care face with identity theft. Attention to youth rights, participation in transition planning, and other critical issues—changes in substance abuse grants part of this bill, and we appreciate the broader application for various purposes, to allocate time-limited treatment services so children can safely re-unite with recovered parents.

We encourage you to consider broader child welfare grants and that these grants will have a broader substance abuse focus. Funding for child welfare workforce development and the accompanying requirements on monthly visits to children in foster care. Additional clarification on the state tracking and reporting of the adoption maintenance-of-effort provisions as enacted by PL 110-351 will provide a greater assurance that more funds are re-invested into state child welfare systems. Clarification of the education protection for children in foster care. Provisions that will help address issue young people in foster care face with identity theft. Attention to youth rights, participation in transition planning, and other critical issues—changes in substance abuse grants part of this bill, and we appreciate the broader application for various purposes, to allocate time-limited treatment services so children can safely re-unite with recovered parents.

We appreciate your efforts to move the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 forward in a bipartisan/bicameral way by the end of September. The National Foster Care Coalition will promote this legislation among its membership and is pleased to provide any assistance in moving the legislation forward.

Sincerely,

CRISTAL WARD ALLEN,

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

H6296

September 21, 2011

PCSAO.

Hon. MAX BAUCUS, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. GEOFF DAVIS, Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

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

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Human Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.


As a state that has shown improved outcomes related to our budget neutral Title IV-E, Protect Ohio Waiver (Ohio leads the nation with a 43% Safe Reduction in the number of children in foster care between 2002–2010, AFCARS data), we strongly support congressional recognition that children and families in other States can also benefit from Title IV-E Waivers allowing flexible funding. We encourage you to consider broader child welfare funding reform in the near future.

Ohio’s child welfare system is also extremely supportive of reauthorization of the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families programs under the present funding. Ensuring funds to strengthen families—keeping them intact, reuniting or finding and supporting alternate permanent families—is essential for our children’s well being. We know that children grow best in stable, permanent families.

The Court Improvement Program in Ohio has aided in reforming our system. Courts play a critical role in decision making and oversight related to child safety and permanency, and the CIP in Ohio has focused on timeliness, improving procedures, focused well being oversight and adapting court philosophy and procedure as more children are raised by kinship families.

Ohio is struggling with too many children coming into foster care due to pervasive addictions to prescription pain killers, heroin, and other substances—we support the substance abuse grants part of this bill, and we appreciate the broader application for various purposes, to allocate time-limited treatment services so children can safely re-unite with recovered parents.

Ohio is ready to embrace other bill provisions such as addressing services for foster children and youth including prevention of identity theft and improving transitional youth planning, improving educational outcomes, strengthening sibling placements, and addressing the developmental needs of infants and toddlers in foster care. Our Child Fatality Review system already strives to review all available data and apply lessons and recommend improved policy to prevent future child deaths, and Ohio is dedicated to re-investing saved funds as more children become eligible for Title IV-E Adoption Assistance funds.

We appreciate your efforts to move The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 forward in a bipartisan/bicameral way by the end of September. As an Elective Trustees of Public Children Services Association of Ohio, we urge Congress to promptly pass this important legislation.

Please contact PCSAO’s Executive Director, Crystal Ward Allen, at 614-224-5802 or crystal@pcsa.org with any questions, concerns or requests.

Sincerely,

Cristal Ward Allen,
Executive Director, PCSAO on behalf of Public Children Services Association of Ohio, 2011 Board of Trustees:
Chip Spinning, President/Director, Madison Co. Children Services;
Denise Stewart, Vice President/Director, Mahoning County Children Services;
Randy Beck, Secretary/Director, Wayne County Children Services;
Molra Wei, Treasurer/Director, Hamilton Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services;
Scott Ferris/Director, Allen County Children Services;
Andrea Reik/Director, Athens County Children Services;
Dwight Frech/Director Belmont Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services;
Kate Oenfenberger/Doctor, Carroll Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services;
Carolyn Miller/Doctor rocking County Children Services;
Teresa Ait/Director, Huron Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services;
June Cannon/Doctor, Miami County Children Services;
Gary Crow/Doctor, Lorain County Children Services;
Corey Walker/Doctor Pauling Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services;
Lisa Wittshire/Doctor, Scioto County Children Services;
John Saros, JD/Director, Summit County Children Services.

FIRST FOCUS CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN.

September 21, 2011.

with you to ensure better care for our nation’s most vulnerable children.

H6297

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLIE

CWLA,

Washington, DC, September 15, 2011.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BAUCUS, RANKING MEMBER HATCH, CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBER DOUGGETT:

We hope that Congress will follow your lead and work closely with the Administration to ensure swift passage of The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (HR 2883) to authorize demonstration projects via a waiver of Title IV-E. CWLA members are located in all fifty states and the District of Columbia to provide a wide range of services from prevention to placement and permanent services including child protection, family support and preservation, adoptions, foster care, kinship care, and children services improvement and innovation projects provided in residential settings. As a non-profit leadership and membership-based child welfare organization, CWLA is committed to enlisting your continued support in ensuring that all children and youth have the support that they need to grow into healthy contributing members of society.

Part I. Child Welfare Services (CWS) provides critical flexible funding for a broad range of services designed to support, prevent, and reunite children and their families. While we know that prevention services are underfunded, in light of current austerity we acknowledge that the maintenance of this program’s $325 million authorization is positive. However, with the expectation of further cuts to discretionary funding levels over the next decade, it is critical to reiterate within this context that vulnerable children and families should be held harmless in all budget balancing strategies.

State Child Welfare Services Plans serve as a blueprint for the continuing preeminent strategies designed to prevent and ameliorate maltreatment. Through requirements encompassing case management, permanency planning, program development and innovation, and systems collaboration activities, fundamental protections and core service provision is ensured for the vulnerable populations served with these funds. CWLA comments the subcommittee for strengthening these plans. H.R. 2883 requires the plans to respond to identified emotional trauma needs associated with maltreatment and removal, strengthens oversight of prescription medication monitoring protocols, encourages agencies to reduce time in foster care and address developmental needs especially for children younger than five, and mandates the reporting of child maltreatment deaths.

Part II. Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) is an important funding stream for the operation of specific service categories. Although the services overlap, the four specified categories in PSSF create important distinctions in types of families in need. The additional targeted activities bring attention and resources to pressing needs including case management, substance abuse, court improvement, and mentoring for children or prisoners. CWLA supports the way that HR 2883 maintains this structure. In addition, with a larger role for Federal resources, we recognize the nation’s strained financial condition. Therefore, we appreciate...
the continuation of $200 million in discretionary funds and the room appropriators have to fully fund the program. In recognition of the difficulty of increasing funding, we think it is important that H.R. 2883 amends the reporting requirements to Congress to include actual spending in addition to planned spending by service category. We believe that tracking actual spending will further reveal that they are supporting necessary and effective programs for vulnerable children and families.

Courts are an integral component of the child welfare system, providing pivotal decisions of maltreatment findings and approval of permanency plans. PSSF is concerned that there are few places in child welfare law where funding is provided for the courts. We appreciate your receptiveness to our suggestions for the continued $50 million annually set aside for the Court Improvement Program and the dedication of $1 million specifically for tribal courts and are pleased to see them both included in H.R. 2883. In addition, we support the way the bill bolsters court improvement plans by clarifying that they should include requirements related to concurrent planning in support of judicial improvement and the engagement of the entire family in court processes. CWLA also applauds the enhancement of the child abuse and neglect grant under H.R. 2883. Because all children affected by parental substance abuse, regardless of the particular substance used, deserve assistance, we strongly agree with the removal of the provision giving greater weight to applicants addressing methamphetamine abuse specifically.

CWLA welcomes the bill’s data standardization and improved data matching section. We understand that the administration has undertaken efforts in this direction and appreciate that they are both building on the existing authority of the federal child welfare law. We stand ready to work with you on strengthening the existing framework and supporting the efforts in both directions.

We also support the inclusion of the Revised Uniform Standards for Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Act in H.R. 2883. We believe that increased tracking of these children and their outcomes will help ensure the well-being of our most vulnerable children: infants and toddlers in the child welfare system. We particularly appreciate the provision requiring state child welfare plans to include a description of activities to address the developmental needs of young children. This provision is a tremendous step forward for children who face great adversity in their lives.

We appreciate your leadership in highlighting the needs of young children within the child welfare system that have promising potential. However, CWLA does not believe that the restoration of waiver authority constitutes a comprehensive solution to the problems faced by the child welfare system. More ambitious approaches to reforming the federal financing structure should be undertaken. Accordingly, CWLA supports the bill’s three-year restoration of waiver authority while consensus on more comprehensive approaches is being developed. CWLA specifically supports the eligibility requirements included in H.R. 2883. We believe that the policies in the legislation have the power to encourage states to implement practices that will improve their child welfare systems and the lives of those within them.

CWLA appreciates your leadership in crafting this important legislation. H.R. 2883 makes positive improvements to IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act and supports its passage. If you have any follow up questions, feel free to contact Sean Hughes, Director of Congressional Affairs at 202-590-8772 or Suzanne Ayer, Policy Associate at 202-688-4178.

Sincerely,

CHRISTINE JAMES-BROWN, President/CEO.

September 19, 2011.

HON. GEOFF DAVIS, Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

HON. LLOYD DOGGERTY, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGERTY: On behalf of Zero to Three, I write to offer our support for the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011 (H.R. 2883) and specifically to express our appreciation for the provisions that would promote the positive development of very young children in the child welfare system. Our organizations have worked together to identify ways that all levels of government could better address the developmental needs of infants and toddlers who have been abused or neglected. This work resulted in the publication last spring of A Call to Action on Behalf of Maltreated Infants and Toddlers, which advocates for child welfare policies and practices that view the care of young children through a developmental lens. We are so pleased that the legislation you have introduced would take important steps toward infusing child welfare policy with that developmental approach.

We particularly appreciate the provision requiring state child welfare plans to include a description of activities to address the developmental needs of young children. This provision is a tremendous step forward for children who face great adversity in their lives. The good news is that intervening early with appropriate interventions can promote positive development and facilitate family visitation and parent–child relationships. These steps are particularly important, because infants and toddlers are the most vulnerable to maltreatment and comprise 31% of children entering foster care. The first three years of life are a time of rapid brain development, when the foundation for all learning that follows is formed. Relationships are the context within which early development unfolds, so it is not surprising that babies are particularly sensitive to the effects of maltreatment. Maltreatment can literally alter the chemistry of the brain, weakening its architecture and placing young children at significant risk for later cognitive, social, and emotional deficits. If child welfare practices are not oriented toward supporting this sensitive stage of development, as well as families’ ability to nurture their children, they can hinder the ability of young children to develop normally.

Ensuring that child welfare practices are informed by what we know from the science of brain development can promote early interventions that will improve the outlook for babies and avoid the costs to society that accompany adverse brain development and placing young children at risk for later cognitive, social, and emotional deficits. Maltreated infants and toddlers are four to five times more likely than other young children to have developmental impairments. The removal of babies from their parents’ care, coupled with foster care practices that are often not guided by their developmental needs, can compound the effects of maltreatment. The good news is that intervening early with appropriate supports can improve the outlook for these babies and avoid the costs to society that accompany developmental impairments.

Last spring, Zero to Three joined with American Humane Association, the Children’s Defense Fund to issue A Call to Action on Behalf of Maltreated Infants and Toddlers. This publication advocates for child welfare policies and practices at all levels of government that view the care of young children through a developmental lens. This legislation is the right step in answering our call. We believe it will spur states to bring the science of early brain development into their child welfare systems. We applaud your leadership in infusing this perspective into federal child welfare law and promoting positive development for vulnerable babies.

Thank you for all you do for young children who face great adversity in their lives.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW E. MELMED, Executive Director.
I also want to thank the ranking member of the Human Resources Subcommittee, Mr. Doggett of Texas, for working with me on this legislation and for his efforts to improve how we serve children and families across the country.

Finally, I want to note that this legislation does not add to the deficit since it simply extends current funding levels of the programs that are extended.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the chairman, Mr. Davis, is correct. We have worked on this together. We have participated in hearings and have learned together and cooperated on this very important subject to which we may bring differing perspectives but a common goal of wanting to respond to the needs of America’s most vulnerable children.

I believe that this bipartisan legislation which I do fully support, is important; however, it is also important to understand what we support and where we have differences and to understand what this legislation accomplishes and what it fails to accomplish. This bill is certainly preferable to allowing two very important laws to expire next week.

Each year, over 700,000 children here in America become victims of abuse and neglect, perpetrated by the very people who are supposed to love and care for them. I think most Americans, as do my wife, Libby, and I, when we’re back home in Texas and surrounded by Clara, Zayla, and Ella, our three granddaughters, believe it’s just almost incomprehensible that parents or grandparents could cause harm to a member of their own families. Yet that is the reality that too many of our children face. One expert came to our committee during the hearing and suggested that, once every 6 hours of every day, a child dies in America as a result of abuse.

I agree that both the Child Welfare Services and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families laws should be renewed for another 5 years. I disagree that these programs should be continued at their current baseline funding levels. We need growing and funding limited, too many of our most vulnerable children cannot access the services that they so desperately need. These are the children whose neglect not only produces problems for them, but will produce more problems for all of American society in the future.

They are the children we should be helping today so that we are not incarcerating them after they have done harm to someone tomorrow.

Less than half of the children in foster care in America today receive federal assistance to help with the room and board. Today, 40 percent of children who are found to be victims of abuse and neglect don’t receive any follow-up or intervention at all. That is a very big gap that will likely only grow over the course of the next 5 years with the legislation that we are renewing.

In my home State of Texas, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act accounts for 34 percent of our $5 million unfunded funding gap in supporting child abuse and neglect prevention programs last year. In San Antonio, for example, these programs provide important resources to help vulnerable families through the Bexar County Child Welfare Board.

This bill also grants States support for parental substance abuse programs. My friend Darlene Byrne, a district judge in Austin, Texas, who helped establish the Family Treatment Drug Court Program that was partially funded by dollars from this act that we’re renewing, writes that she has seen new babies who are not drug positive, moms and couples reunify with their families, and workers receive their GEDs or high school equivalency diplomas and find employment. These are the people that these programs help.

In short, she says that this program has contributed to transforming lives and in helping to stop the cycle of drug abuse, poverty, and violence in Texas. It is important both to those who benefit directly and to all of us who have a stake in having folks participate to the full extent of their God-given potential, not posing dangers to the rest of our society.

Today’s legislation also includes, as Mr. Davis indicated, some modest policy changes that strengthen the States’ abilities to respond to at-risk children. Mr. Speaker, the bill, I believe, leaves too much under the course we think, though, in this current climate that the renewal of the legislation as it’s proposed is the best that we can do for our at-risk children. This bill reauthorizes help to at least some children who become victims of maltreatment. It provides adoption services and activities to some vulnerable families, and it promotes adoption services for those children who cannot safely return to their biological parents.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDermott).

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill to renew the Nation’s child welfare programs. I’m glad to see this happening today, as it has in the past by unanimous consent, and it’s important not just to keep these programs funded and renewed. With more than one in five children in the country living in poverty and with so many odds stacked against foster kids, we need to do more. We need to make progress. That’s why I’m so supportive of this bill, because it is not just an extension of the program; it has some important and targeted innovations.

Some States, especially my home State of Washington, have some truly new ideas about how they can do more to prevent children being put into foster care even in tough economic times. One of the real innovations of this bill is to give States waivers for some governmental funding restrictions so that they can test these innovative interventions in their child welfare programs. If the States can maintain their current quality and if the innovations they want to try meet solid criteria, the Federal Government should be a partner in making real progress. That’s what these new waivers do.

Washington State is one of the leaders in innovating child welfare policy, and it has some things it has been eager to try out. Right now, the law doesn’t allow for this kind of experimentation, but this bill gives States a way to begin. Washington State is not the only State that has expressed interest in having these kinds of programs. There are some States already ready to make these moves.

Now, the Department of Health and Human Services allowed this kind of experimentation, but it was allowed to lapse. This is really an extension of something we’ve had before. HHS was allowed to give out a number of waivers in the past, and some progress was made in a number of States. This bill restores that limited waiver authority and sets out criteria to keep the integrity and level of effort they need to have. We need to allow these States to do it.

In addition to extending the program and making more room for innovation, the bill does something else that’s really important. In 2008, we passed the Fostering Connections and Increasing Adoptions law. This Fostering Connections law did a lot of good in helping foster kids have a better chance of truly making it in this country. Among other things, it addressed the health concerns of foster children who moved from home to home and from health care setting to health care setting and it required States to develop health coordination plans for these kids so that they had some continuity of care. These plans had to include oversight of prescription medications, including psychotropic drugs.

As a psychiatrist who has worked with children in child welfare and the juvenile justice system, I am very concerned about the use of psychotropic drugs. It has bothered me for a long time. In the fostering care population, it is a particularly vulnerable group being overmedicated with drugs and it is a particular problem in this population. The critical need of care. You want somebody to be monitoring what’s happening as they move from home to home to home. We need
to do more. We need to get a clearer picture of what is happening with these kinds of medications in the foster kids, and we need to make sure they are being used properly and are not overly prescribed.

One of the parts about this whole law that’s crazy is that when a kid gets to 18 they could be on a medication. When they hit 18, they’re done. Their Medicaid ends. They have no continuity of the drugs. They go off cold turkey. So there’s some real questions that we need to answer here.

This bill takes the 2008 requirements another step forward and it requires States to adopt protocols for using and monitoring psychotropic medications among foster children.

Mr. Speaker, I speak strongly in favor of the bill and urge my colleagues to say "yea."

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from California (Ms. Bass), one of the leaders on this subject of foster children, who came and testified before me based on her long experience working in the State of California in the assembly on this subject.

Ms. BASS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2883, known as the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act. As co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Care, I am proud to stand with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in support of this important legislation.

Youth in the child welfare system fight for what so many of us take for granted—a family. In California, my home State, the Nation’s largest foster care system in any given year, as many as 100,000 children can be placed in temporary out-of-home care. Foster parents and relatives are the frontline caregivers for children when their parents are unable to care for them.

A pool of dedicated, loving foster parents is critical for our Nation’s foster youth as they wait to be reunited with their parents or achieve permanency with a relative caregiver or adoptive family. However, there is a significant shortage of foster parents.

In May, I introduced legislation calling for a study to find out how to best recruit and retain foster parents. This was included in the original House bill reauthorizing title IV-B child welfare programs introduced in August. I’m pleased that the modified bill before us today includes a provision that encourages States to develop and implement a plan to improve the recruitment and retention of high-quality foster family homes.

H.R. 2883 builds on some of the best practices that were shared with me as I’ve traveled California hearing from youth, child welfare workers, and parents. The bill also appropriately addresses challenges facing the child welfare system by requiring States to address emotional trauma in foster children and to adopt protocols for using and monitoring psychotropic medications.

I am very pleased with the comments of my colleague, Mr. McDermott, who talked about the use of psychotropics, and I would just add that, in too many cases, the children are prescribed multiple medications. And in talking with a number of youth up and down the State of California, one of the things that many youth were heard was, Can you please help me get off the medication?

I would like to thank Ways and Means Chairman CAMP, Ranking Member LEVIN, Human Resources Subcommittee Chair GROFF, DAVIS, and Ranking Member DOGGETT for their unwavering commitment to our most vulnerable youth.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), who has been very active in a Foster Youth Financial Security Act.

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act.

This bill includes a provision from the Foster Youth Financial Security Act that I introduced with my colleague from California (Mr. STARK) to address disturbingly high rates of identity theft among foster youth. I, along with many others, was absolutely outraged to find that foster children are disproportionately victims of identity theft since their personal information passes through so many hands.

Mr. Speaker, as I saw firsthand when my parents welcomed foster youth into our home over many years, they already faced tremendous obstacles without the increased threat of having their identity taken and their credit ruined, which prevents them from finding a place to live, accessing credit on their own, or obtaining other basic needs.

This bill would ensure that each foster youth over 16 years of age receives free credit checks before leaving the system and assistance clearing any inaccuracies that may have come to light. Reports have shown that if done effectively, the cost is minimal.

I want to thank Mr. Speaker, the committee for their interest in this issue and the many advocates who have championed this cause. This is only the first step in providing foster youth the tools that they need and deserve to succeed, and I look forward to our continued work together on this issue.

As I pointed out so many times, the kids in foster care already face significant challenges of their own of a personal nature. It is a shame that their identity is stolen and they’re further victimized. This bill would identify problems early on and clear up the inaccuracies so they can start their adult life with a fresh start with their credit intact.

I thank both gentlemen, the chair, and the ranking member for their outstanding support of this provision.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, some in this House have suggested earlier in the year that the programs embodied in this legislation, and everything else that opens opportunities through government support from Pell Grants to Title I funding for education to the school lunch program to Head Start, that all of these are “welfare” and should be cut. Fortunately, that approach is not being taken here today. We are reauthorizing, in a bipartisan way, these two very important programs that would expire next week.

Mr. Speaker, however, it should be noted that, much like somebody might be flatlined, we are flat funding the renewal of these programs, meaning that in 5 years we are authorizing the same amount of money for these programs, if it can be appropriated, that existed last year. That means that there are many needs in our country that will not be fully addressed in this legislation. It means that last year, if less than half of those in foster care received support for food and board, they will be in the same situation over the course of this legislation. It means that the 40 percent of children who are subject to abuse and neglect are unlikely to be able to access services as they were last year.

But renewing this legislation remains despite the deficiencies, an important accomplishment in the current political environment. And, as Mr. DAVIS and a number of other speakers have noted, we have made some modest improvements. Another of those not touched on yet is our work in this legislation to ensure that children in foster care can stay in the schools that they started in, even though they may be moved between families. That’s an important part of adding a little certainty to the lives of children who have been abused or neglected and find themselves with a great deal of uncertainty.

It is for the improvements in this act and the recognition of what harm would be done if this act were not renewed that we have the convictions that so many child advocacy groups have joined in supporting it—the Child Welfare League of America, First Focus, Zero to Three—as well as groups of those organizations that are involved in administering some of these funds: the National Conference of State Court Administrators, the American Public Human Services Association, and the Conference of State Court Administrators.
September 21, 2011

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I believe this legislation is important. It’s important to get it adopted promptly, so that the Senate can respond to our bipartisan approval today, as Mr. Davis has suggested they have already begun to do in the committee process, and move forward to see it fully adopted by next week. I urge all of my colleagues to join in supporting this legislation. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Doggett), for working with me to bring this measure to the floor today and thank him and thank both the majority and minority staffs for their hard work on this effort. H.R. 2883 is a bipartisan, bicameral, no-cost effort to extend and make modest adjustments to programs designed to help ensure the safety and well-being of children at risk of abuse and neglect. We need to do all we can to ensure more children remain safely in their homes, and this bill will help to do so.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES.

September 13, 2011.

HON. DAVE CAMP, Chairman, House Ways & Means, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

HON. SANDY LEVIN, Ranking Member, House Ways & Means, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP AND REPRESENTATIVE LEVIN: On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), we urge you to support H.R. 2883, a bill to renew the authority of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to approve demonstration projects designed to test innovative strategies in state child welfare programs and reauthorizing the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program. Congressmen Geoff Davis and Lloyd Doggett have fashioned bipartisan legislation that helps create opportunities to enhance the state-federal partnership to assist our nation’s most vulnerable children.

NCSL supports reinstating and expanding federal waiver authority so that states can test the results of increased funding flexibility on the development of service alternatives and on the overall delivery of child welfare services. This allows states to target programs to address the needs of their youngest citizens. By renewing and extending Title IV-E waiver authority through 2014, H.R. 2883 will give states an enhanced ability to provide early intervention and crisis intervention services that will safely reduce out-of-home placements and improve child outcomes.

NCSL supports the reauthorization of the PSSF program. The PSSF program enhances state efforts to develop additional family preservation, family reunification, and family support programs. We appreciate the flexibility provided to states in H.R. 2883 and that the legislation does not preempt current state laws.

H.R. 2883 will allow states to improve the quality of their child welfare interventions and reinvest savings in their programs. It will also provide both state and federal legislators with innovative and effective approaches to transform the lives of children who are at risk of abuse and neglect. We applaud Congressmen Davis and Doggett for crafting this legislation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM T. FOUND, Executive Director, NCSL.

NATIONAL INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ASSOCIATION.

September 13, 2011.

HON. GEOFF DAVIS, Chair, Honor. LLOYD DOGGETT, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, Washington, DC.

HON. MAX BAUCUS, Chair, Honor. ORRIN HATCH, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee.

DEAR REPS. GEOFF DAVIS AND DOGGETT AND SENATORS BAUCUS AND HATCH: The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) writes in support of the Title IV-B of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (HR 2883/S 1542) which would reauthorize programs under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act—Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services; Promoting Safe and Stable Families: Regional Partnerships on substance abuse; and the Court Improvement Program.

Committee staff on both sides of the aisle has been most open to meeting with us, and we thank them for their hard work and interest in more heavily involving Indian and Alaska Native communities in these programs. We especially thank Sonja Neebeht, Ryan Martin, Diedra Henry-Spires, and Becky Ship.

NICWA has worked on several reauthorizations of Title IV-B, notably in 2006 when a number of improvements were enacted regarding tribal participation. The 2006 Act increased tribal allocations and provided common sense flexibility for tribal administration of the program. In fiscal year 2011, 170 tribes/tribal organizations received $6.2 million from the Child Welfare Services Program and 126 tribes/tribal consortia received $11 million from the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. In addition, tribes are the lead grantee in six of the 53 Regional Partnerships on substance abuse grants.

The Title IV-B program that has bypassed tribes is the Court Improvement Program and we are most grateful for the breakthrough on this matter in the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act. The bill would, for the first time, make tribes eligible to apply for competitive grants for this program and would allocate $1 million annually for this purpose.

There is a great need in Indian Country for assistance for tribal courts work in the area of child welfare. We also appreciate the provision which would allow tribes operating Title IV-E (Foster Care and Adoption Assistance) programs to apply for waivers for child welfare demonstration projects, again, thank you. We look forward to continuing to work with you on child welfare matters.

Sincerely,

TERRY L. CROSS, Executive Director.

YOUTH VILLAGES.

September 13, 2011.

HON. GEOFF DAVIS, Chairman, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

HON. LLOYD DOGGETT, Ranking Member, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBER DUTTON: On behalf of Youth Villages, I am writing to thank you for your leadership and support for H.R. 2883, to introduce the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (S. 1542/H.R. 2883). Voice for Adoption is a membership advocacy organization, we speak out for our nation’s 107,000 waiting children in foster care. Our members, who are spread across the country, recruit families to adopt children in need and support them with ongoing support services. Our members also provide vital support services to the system that promotes in-home treatment and family unification.

Regards,

PATRICK LAWLER, CEO, Youth Villages.

VOICE FOR ADOPTION,

Washington, DC, September 11, 2011.

HON. MAX BAUCUS,

Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

HON. GEOFF DAVIS,

Longworth House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

HON. ORRIN HATCH,

Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

HON. LLOYD DOGGETT,

Cannon House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN BAUCUS AND DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBERS HATCH AND DOGGETT: On behalf of Voice for Adoption’s members I am writing to thank you for your leadership and support for H.R. 2883, to introduce the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (S. 1542/H.R. 2883). Voice for Adoption (VFA) is a membership advocacy organization, we speak out for our nation’s 107,000 waiting children in foster care. Our members, who are spread across the country, recruit families to adopt children in need and support them with ongoing support services. Our members also provide vital support services to the system that promotes in-home treatment and family unification.

Regards,

TERRY L. CROSS, Executive Director.
help adoptive families through the challenges they often face raising children with painful pasts.

Voice for Adoption supports this legislation, which acts to reauthorize two major child welfare programs, the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program. Under the PSSF program the adoption assistance de-link funds on post-adoption support services. VFA also supports other important improvements made in the bill including: the requirement for better reporting on post-adoption support services, and transparency to access this data, the requirement of States to address the developmental needs of young children and reducing their amount of time spent in foster care, the requirement of States to work with tribal and emotional trauma and the clarification of educational protections for children in foster care, the requirement for state protocols and procedures relating to the use of psychotropic medications, best issues for foster youth, inclusion of state waivers and measures that include quality of care improvements for foster children.

Voice for Adoption is proud to support this bipartisan/bicameral legislation, as it exists to reauthorize programs that protect children and families and promote both permanency and support for children in foster care. We are also happy to inform and encourage our members to support this bill.

Sincerely,

NICOLE DOWNS, Executive Director

AMERICAN INDIAN ASSOCIATION

DEAR SENSORS BAUCUS AND HATCH AND REPRESENTATIVES DAVIS AND DOGGETT: Thank you for your introduction of H.R. 2883 and S. 1542, the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act. The Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA) strongly supports this legislation.

AAIA is an 89 year old Indian advocacy organization representing the Native American Tribes and Nations and governed by an all-Native American Board of Directors. We have been involved with Indian child welfare issues for decades, including working closely with the House and Senate on tribal provisions in the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 and the Fostering Connections to Success and Promoting Adoptions Act of 2008.

We are particularly supportive of the provisions in both bills that would allocate $1 million for competitive Court Improvement Program grants to Indian tribal courts and allow tribes operating Title IV–E programs to apply for waivers for child welfare demonstration projects. We also appreciate and support the language that would make the definition of Indian tribes consistent in both Parts 1 and 2 of Title IV–B.

Once again, thank you for your support of this bipartisan legislation and these tribal issues and the House and Senate staff (Sonja Nesbit, Ryan Wilson, Diedra Henry-Spires and Becky Shipp) that have been so helpful in this process.

Sincerely,

JACK F. TROPE, Executive Director

DEAR CHAIRMAN DAVIS, CONGRESSMAN DOGGETT, CHAIRMAN BAUCUS AND SENATOR HATCH: American Humane Association strongly supports the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program and that these grants will have a permanent, loving family and advocated for adoptive families to receive necessary support services.

NACAC is an adoption support and advocacy organization with more than 1,000 members nationwide. We represent adoptive families and foster parents, adoptees, adoption professionals, parent support groups, and adoption agencies and organizations. Since 1974, we have supported the right of every child to have a permanent, loving family and advocated for adoptive families to receive necessary support services.

NACAC strongly supports the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program. In particular, we are happy that the PSSF program has required states to designate at least 20 percent of the funds to adoption support and promotion services. These funds have been used across the country to recruit families for foster children who cannot return home and to support families raising these children with special needs.

We were pleased that H.R. 2883 will continue these valuable efforts while also adding several enhancements. We strongly support requiring states to document how they spent the funds in order to improve the maintenance of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, which expanded federal eligibility for Title IV–E adoption assistance. In addition, NACAC strongly supports the requirement that the legislation require states to spend a portion of these reinvestment funds on post-adoption services. Since many children adopted from foster care have significant special needs, and post-adoption services are designed to help adoptive families through the challenges they often face raising children with painful pasts.

Once again, we restate our appreciation of your efforts to move this forward in a bipartisan fashion with all due speed. Please feel free to reach out to the American Humane Association for any assistance in moving forward with this legislation and other matters before your committees.

Sincerely,

JOHN SCIAMANNA, Director, Policy and Government Affairs, Child Welfare.


Hon. GEOFF DAVIS, Cannon House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES DAVIS AND DOGGETT: On behalf of the North American Council to Adoption Support and Promotion Services, I am writing to express our support for the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (H.R. 2883). We are grateful for your leadership in this important legislation and strongly believe it will improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

NACAC is an adoption support and advocacy organization with more than 1,000 members nationwide. We represent adoptive families and foster parents, adoptees, adoption professionals, parent support groups, and adoption agencies and organizations. Since 1974, we have supported the right of every child to have a permanent, loving family and advocated for adoptive families to receive necessary support services.

NACAC strongly supports the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program. In particular, we are happy that the PSSF program has required states to designate at least 20 percent of the funds to adoption support and promotion services. These funds have been used across the country to recruit families for foster children who cannot return home and to support families raising these children with special needs.

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Once again, we restate our appreciation of your efforts to move this forward in a bipartisan fashion with all due speed. Please feel free to reach out to the American Humane Association for any assistance in moving forward with this legislation and other matters before your committees.

Sincerely,

JOE KROLL, Executive Director.
September 21, 2011

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

Hon. GEOFF DOGGETT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Reproductive that states currently operating and that only one of them needs to be a new member states’ practices, as well as new programs and practices that work. APHSA also fully supports reauthorization of the Court Improvement Program. The Court Improvement Program allows our member agencies to work in close partnership with their state and local judicial systems to improve permanency and well-being needs of children in a timely and complete manner. This program also supports the essential cross-system training of judges, attorneys and legal representatives in child welfare cases. Once again, we look forward to continuing the work of improving services and outcomes for at-risk children. We continue to be available as a resource as regulations and guidance is developed to meet the provisions of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011. Sincerely, TRACY L. WAREING, Executive Director, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CPAS, Washington, DC, September 20, 2011. Re The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, H.R. 2883. Hon. GEOFF DOGGETT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BAUCUS AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGETT: On behalf of the 377,000 members of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), I am writing in support of your legislation, H.R. 2883, the “Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act.” The bill calls for grants of Federal funds under the Child Welfare Services program and the Safe and Stable program to report certain data to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and for DHHS to develop a rule designating standard data elements and data reporting requirements for the information to be collected. The DFPS will use the data in DHHS’s “shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate existing nonproprietary standards, such as eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL). The purpose of that reporting is to increase the transparency and the ability to analyze financial and other data that has been proved to improve results. XBRL provides a detailed yet customizable approach to gathering data and will provide significant transparency to the Federal government and the American people regarding the use of tax-filer funds.

XBRL has been used for a number of years by the Federal government in areas such as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation call reports and public company financial reporting to the Securities and Exchange Commission. Importantly, such standardized business reporting is also expanding in both the United States by state governmental agencies and worldwide, where data standards are being leveraged to significantly reduce the compliance burden and, at the same time, enhance the usability and transparency of reported information. Including provisions to require reporting of information to the Department of Health and Human Services Court Improvement and Innovation Act will make the reporting process more efficient and enhance comparability of such information for DHHS, the Congress, and other stakeholders who need to monitor and analyze the use of these funds.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. We are also happy to discuss with you additional areas where implementation of data Improvement will further enhance reporting and make it more valuable to all types of stakeholders of data. If you have any questions, or if we can be of any further assistance, please contact Diana Huntress Deem.

Sincerely, BARRY C. MELANCION, CPA, President and CEO, CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES, CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS, Washington, DC.

Re Child and Family Services Act (HR 2883).

Hon. GEOFF DOGGETT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DAVIS AND RANKING MEMBER DOGGETT: On behalf of the American Law Institute, the Conference of State Court Administrators, and the Conference of the Chief Justices, we write to support the reauthorization of the three Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant programs through FY 2016 at the $2.2 Billion level. The three Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant programs are critical for state courts as they provide the only federal funds to state courts for the purpose of improving state court oversight of abuse and neglect cases; and have been invaluable in assisting courts to improve and expedite our processes and procedures. These funds have resulted in abuser and neglected children moving more expeditiously to safe and permanent homes and improved outcomes for children in need of protection. Our work, however, is not complete, so the reauthorization of these funds will allow us to continue our work to improve results for these children.

We appreciate the new purpose which will allow CIP funds to be used “to increase and improve engagement of the entire family in court processes relating to child welfare, family preservation, family reunification, and adoption.” These funds provide state courts with greater flexibility in the use of the funds. We also support the provision that will allow state courts to subgrant single application Federal Funds on the CIP grants. This will allow state courts to eliminate duplicative paperwork and reporting, which will free up time for reform efforts. While the legislation reduces the amount of funds available to state courts, we do understand the need to also provide financial assistance to tribal courts.

Thank you again for your efforts on behalf of state courts. If we can provide you with additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to working with the Government Relations Office of the National Center for State Courts.

Sincerely, CHIEF JUDGE ERIC T. WASHINGTON, President, Conference of Chief Justices, and ROASLW N. FRIESS, President, Conference of State Court Administrators.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act that states currently operating and that only one of them needs to be a new member states’ practices, as well as new programs and practices that work. APHSA also fully supports reauthorization of the Court Improvement Program. The Court Improvement Program allows our member agencies to work in close partnership with their state and local judicial systems to improve permanency and well-being needs of children in a timely and complete manner. This program also supports the essential cross-system training of judges, attorneys and legal representatives in child welfare cases. Once again, we look forward to continuing the work of improving services and outcomes for at-risk children. We continue to be available as a resource as regulations and guidance is developed to meet the provisions of the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act of 2011. Sincerely, TRACY L. WAREING, Executive Director, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CPAS, Washington, DC, September 20, 2011. Re The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, H.R. 2883.
and Innovation Act (H.R. 2883). This legislation shows that we can work together across the aisle to improve our child welfare system. Yet this bill is just one step in our ongoing efforts to fix the foster care system. In this time of unacceptable poverty and inequality, we must continue to support families in order to prevent kids from being neglected or abused. As we debate how to shrink our debt, we must also ensure that preserving and improving the safety net that protects our children is a higher priority than protecting special interest tax breaks.

Despite the fact that I am not on the Human Resources Subcommittee for the first time in many years, I am pleased that my colleagues still listen to some of my ideas. Last year, Congressman Langevin and I introduced a bill to reduce the high number of foster youth who are victims of identity theft and are unable to secure student loans or even get a credit card. Today’s legislation includes a provision from our bill that will provide youth who are about to age out of foster care with a copy of their credit report as well as resources to help clear up any credit issues. This provision is what I hope is the first movement toward ensuring that foster youth leave the system with a clean financial and credit history to succeed.

There are many important provisions in today’s bill: maintaining a set-aside to support caseworker visits with foster children; decreasing the overuse of psychotropic drugs on foster youth; and improving education stability for children in care.

Children in foster care are our collective responsibility. The reforms made in this bill will make children safer. I thank the Chairman, the ranking Member, and all the staff involved in crafting this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support it today.

Ms. JACkSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2883, “The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act,” which reauthorizes Title IV–B of the Social Security Act, including the Promoting Safe and Stable Families and Child Welfare Services programs, while also reinstating the authority of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to authorize States to implement innovative demonstration programs for States to receive Title IV–E waivers.

As Chair of the Congressional Children’s Caucus, I have been a stalwart supporter of protecting the health and welfare of children and families. Today there are more than 463,000 children and youth that are in out-of-home care. Every day, more than a half million U.S. children are in the foster care system with over 120,000 waiting to be adopted. With no permanent legal guardians, they are our Nation’s children, and we have a responsibility to ensure a bright future for those who are handed a tough start in life. Foster children like all children deserve a safe environment to grow and flourish. This piece of legislation is a step in the right direction in addressing the needs of our Nation’s children when they need our help the most. There are many silent heroes who have stepped up to the plate.

There are an estimated 12 million foster care alumni in the U.S. representing all walks of life. Each and every one of the 12 million alumni has a story of their struggles, challenges and success. The Foster care system is supposed to ensure that children are cared for by adults full-time or temporary basis when their parents are unable to provide adequate care. Often the natural parents cannot provide for a child’s care for a variety of reasons such as due to incarceration, physical or mental illness, behavior problems or problems within the family environment. These issues may include child abuse, alcoholism, extreme poverty, or crime. These children often become wards of the State and we have the responsibility to protect their health and to ensure they are provided with the care they need.

If even a single child continues to be abused or neglected while under state supervision then that is one child too many. This legislation, although not ideal, is a valid attempt that is designed to better support the children and their families.

The size of the foster care caseload rises or falls depending upon both the number of entries to foster care—children who are removed from the homes in a given year—and the number of exits in that same year—children reunited with their families, adopted, emancipated, or placed in another permanent setting. The number of entries to foster care has outpaced the number of exits for two decades.

Accountable entities who received “services from Child Protective Services died as a result of abuse 16 times more often than children in the general population 16.3 percent of all fatalities were children who had received services or were ‘known to the system’. These children were already in a high risk category; however, we must do our best to transform these numbers and ensure their safety. Currently at least 716 thousand children received ‘services’ (28 States reporting) or 1 percent of the general population. If CPS intervention had no effect, 1 percent of this group would have suffered a fatality; if CPS intervention had made an improvement, the percentage would be less than 1 percent. However, it is 16.3 times that amount. (18 States reporting)

At this time children are again bearing the brunt of families in crisis. When a household falls into poverty, children are exposed to increased parental distress, inadequate child care arrangements, and poor nutrition. This will lead to an increase of families needing child welfare services. For these reasons I support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2883, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2608, CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 405 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. R. Res. 405

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Senate’s table the bill (H.R. 2608) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order, a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment with the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to adopt without intervening motion.

Sec. 2. House Resolution 399 is laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Ms. Slaugher), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. WOODALL. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

I RUE WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 405 provides for a closed rule for the consideration of H.R. 2608. It’s a temporary continuing resolution that will fund the operations of the

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September 21, 2011