

Brown, Grassley Introduce Legislation to Provide Stable Housing for Foster Youth Transitioning to Adulthood

Senators' Legislation will Help Create Affordable Housing Opportunities for Youth, Prevent Homelessness

Thursday, November 7, 2019

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ranking Member of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, and Charles Grassley (R-IA), Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, introduced legislation to help provide stable housing options for foster care youth transitioning to adulthood.

Each year, approximately 20,000 youth across the country age out of foster care. Unfortunately, this sudden transition places these vulnerable young adults at risk of homelessness and housing instability due to the loss of the financial, educational, and social supports that the child welfare system provides. Research shows that up to one-third of young people experience homelessness during their transition from foster care to adulthood.

The ***Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2019 (S. 2803)*** would address this issue by providing Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers immediately to foster youth who are at risk of homelessness as they transition to adulthood. Today, these young adults often spend years on waiting lists for FUP Vouchers to become available.

“Young people coming out of foster care face enough challenges. Figuring out where you are going to sleep at night – let alone study, prepare for work, and build your future - should not be one of them,” said Brown. **“This legislation will help ensure former foster youth transitioning out of the system have affordable housing options they need to successfully start adulthood and prevent homelessness.”**

“Unfortunately, foster youth who age out of care are oftentimes extremely vulnerable to homelessness or unstable housing. The *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act* addresses this issue by ensuring that former foster youth can access housing assistance and successfully transition to self-sufficiency. This is one step Congress can take to address the negative outcomes experienced by foster youth in our country,” Grassley said.

Specifically, the ***Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2019*** would:

- Streamline access to FUP vouchers for Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in more communities, making it easier to serve foster youth anywhere they live,
- Extend a foster youth's FUP voucher for up to an additional 24 months as they are working toward self-sufficiency, including participating in a Family Self Sufficiency program,
- Require coordination between PHAs and Public Child Welfare Agencies to identify eligible recipients and help housing agencies to connect youth to supportive services, and
- Require PHAs to submit information to the Secretary to monitor program outcomes

The ***Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2019*** is supported by housing and child welfare organizations, including ACTION Ohio, Ohio Youth Advisory Board, National Center for Housing & Child Welfare, National Alliance to End Homeless, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Children's Defense Fund, First Focus Campaign for Children, Ohio Children's Alliance, Schoolhouse Connection, Youth Homes of Mid-America, National Crittenton, Foster Club, Bethany Christian Services, Children's Home Society of America, Coalition for Family and Children Services in Iowa, National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials and Public Housing Authorities Directors Association.

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