

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2847

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## AN ACT

To make improvements to the John H. Chafee Foster Care  
Independence Program and related provisions.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Services for  
3 Older Youth in Foster Care Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE JOHN H. CHAFEE FOSTER**  
5 **CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM AND RE-**  
6 **LATED PROVISIONS.**

7 (a) **AUTHORITY TO SERVE FORMER FOSTER YOUTH**  
8 **UP TO AGE 23.**—Section 477 of the Social Security Act  
9 (42 U.S.C. 677) is amended—

10 (1) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting “(or 23  
11 years of age, in the case of a State with a certifi-  
12 cation under subsection (b)(3)(A)(ii) to provide as-  
13 sistance and services to youths who have aged out  
14 of foster care and have not attained such age, in ac-  
15 cordance with such subsection)” after “21 years of  
16 age”;

17 (2) in subsection (b)(3)(A)—

18 (A) by inserting “(i)” before “A certifi-  
19 cation”;

20 (B) by striking “children who have left fos-  
21 ter care” and all that follows through the pe-  
22 riod and inserting “youths who have aged out  
23 of foster care and have not attained 21 years of  
24 age.”; and

25 (C) by adding at the end the following:

1           “(ii) If the State has elected under section  
2           475(8)(B) to extend eligibility for foster care to  
3           all children who have not attained 21 years of  
4           age, or if the Secretary determines that the  
5           State agency responsible for administering the  
6           State plans under this part and part B uses  
7           State funds or any other funds not provided  
8           under this part to provide services and assist-  
9           ance for youths who have aged out of foster  
10          care that are comparable to the services and as-  
11          sistance the youths would receive if the State  
12          had made such an election, the certification re-  
13          quired under clause (i) may provide that the  
14          State will provide assistance and services to  
15          youths who have aged out of foster care and  
16          have not attained 23 years of age.”; and

17          (3) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking “chil-  
18          dren who have left foster care” and all that follows  
19          through the period and inserting “youths who have  
20          aged out of foster care and have not attained 21  
21          years of age (or 23 years of age, in the case of a  
22          State with a certification under subparagraph (A)(i)  
23          to provide assistance and services to youths who  
24          have aged out of foster care and have not attained

1 such age, in accordance with subparagraph  
2 (A)(ii).”.

3 (b) AUTHORITY TO REDISTRIBUTE UNSPENT  
4 FUNDS.—Section 477(d) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 677(d))  
5 is amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (4), by inserting “or does not  
7 expend allocated funds within the time period speci-  
8 fied under section 477(d)(3)” after “provided by the  
9 Secretary”; and

10 (2) by adding at the end the following:

11 “(5) REDISTRIBUTION OF UNEXPENDED  
12 AMOUNTS.—

13 “(A) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—To the  
14 extent that amounts paid to States under this  
15 section in a fiscal year remain unexpended by  
16 the States at the end of the succeeding fiscal  
17 year, the Secretary may make the amounts  
18 available for redistribution in the second suc-  
19 ceeding fiscal year among the States that apply  
20 for additional funds under this section for that  
21 second succeeding fiscal year.

22 “(B) REDISTRIBUTION.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary  
24 shall redistribute the amounts made avail-  
25 able under subparagraph (A) for a fiscal

1 year among eligible applicant States. In  
2 this subparagraph, the term ‘eligible appli-  
3 cant State’ means a State that has applied  
4 for additional funds for the fiscal year  
5 under subparagraph (A) if the Secretary  
6 determines that the State will use the  
7 funds for the purpose for which originally  
8 allotted under this section.

9 “(ii) AMOUNT TO BE REDISTRIB-  
10 UTED.—The amount to be redistributed to  
11 each eligible applicant State shall be the  
12 amount so made available multiplied by the  
13 State foster care ratio (as defined in sub-  
14 section (c)(4), except that, in such sub-  
15 section, ‘all eligible applicant States (as de-  
16 fined in subsection (d)(5)(B)(i))’ shall be  
17 substituted for ‘all States’).

18 “(iii) TREATMENT OF REDISTRIBUTED  
19 AMOUNT.—Any amount made available to  
20 a State under this paragraph shall be re-  
21 garded as part of the allotment of the  
22 State under this section for the fiscal year  
23 in which the redistribution is made.

24 “(C) TRIBES.—For purposes of this para-  
25 graph, the term ‘State’ includes an Indian tribe,

1 tribal organization, or tribal consortium that re-  
2 ceives an allotment under this section.”.

3 (c) EXPANDING AND CLARIFYING THE USE OF EDU-  
4 CATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 477(i)(3) of such  
6 Act (42 U.S.C. 677(i)(3)) is amended—

7 (A) by striking “on the date” and all that  
8 follows through “23” and inserting “to remain  
9 eligible until they attain 26”; and

10 (B) by inserting “, but in no event may a  
11 youth participate in the program for more than  
12 5 years (whether or not consecutive)” before  
13 the period.

14 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section  
15 477(i)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 677(i)(1)) is  
16 amended by inserting “who have attained 14 years  
17 of age” before the period.

18 (d) OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 477 of such  
19 Act (42 U.S.C. 677), as amended by subsections (a), (b),  
20 and (c) of this section, is amended—

21 (1) in the section heading, by striking “**INDE-**  
22 **PENDENCE PROGRAM**” and inserting “**PROGRAM**  
23 **FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULT-**  
24 **HOOD**”;

25 (2) in subsection (a)—

1 (A) in paragraph (1)—

2 (i) by striking “identify children who  
3 are likely to remain in foster care until 18  
4 years of age and to help these children  
5 make the transition to self-sufficiency by  
6 providing services” and inserting “support  
7 all youth who have experienced foster care  
8 at age 14 or older in their transition to  
9 adulthood through transitional services”;

10 (ii) by inserting “and post-secondary  
11 education” after “high school diploma”;  
12 and

13 (iii) by striking “training in daily liv-  
14 ing skills, training in budgeting and finan-  
15 cial management skills” and inserting  
16 “training and opportunities to practice  
17 daily living skills (such as financial literacy  
18 training and driving instruction)”;

19 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “who are  
20 likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of  
21 age receive the education, training, and services  
22 necessary to obtain employment” and inserting  
23 “who have experienced foster care at age 14 or  
24 older achieve meaningful, permanent connec-  
25 tions with a caring adult”;

1 (C) in paragraph (3), by striking “who are  
2 likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of  
3 age prepare for and enter postsecondary train-  
4 ing and education institutions” and inserting  
5 “who have experienced foster care at age 14 or  
6 older engage in age or developmentally appro-  
7 priate activities, positive youth development,  
8 and experiential learning that reflects what  
9 their peers in intact families experience”; and

10 (D) by striking paragraph (4) and redesign-  
11 ating paragraphs (5) through (8) as para-  
12 graphs (4) through (7);

13 (3) in subsection (b)—

14 (A) in paragraph (2)(D), by striking “ado-  
15 lescents” and inserting “youth”; and

16 (B) in paragraph (3)—

17 (i) in subparagraph (D)—

18 (I) by inserting “including train-  
19 ing on youth development” after “to  
20 provide training”; and

21 (II) by striking “adolescents pre-  
22 paring for independent living” and all  
23 that follows through the period and  
24 inserting “youth preparing for a suc-  
25 cessful transition to adulthood and



1 making a permanent connection with  
2 a caring adult.”;

3 (ii) in subparagraph (H), by striking  
4 “adolescents” each place it appears and in-  
5 sserting “youth”; and

6 (iii) in subparagraph (K)—

7 (I) by striking “an adolescent”  
8 and inserting “a youth”; and

9 (II) by striking “the adolescent”  
10 each place it appears and inserting  
11 “the youth”; and

12 (4) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (2)  
13 and inserting the following:

14 “(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than  
15 October 1, 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the  
16 Committee on Ways and Means of the House of  
17 Representatives and the Committee on Finance of  
18 the Senate a report on the National Youth in Tran-  
19 sition Database and any other databases in which  
20 States report outcome measures relating to children  
21 in foster care and children who have aged out of fos-  
22 ter care or left foster care for kinship guardianship  
23 or adoption. The report shall include the following:

24 “(A) A description of the reasons for entry  
25 into foster care and of the foster care experi-

1 ences, such as length of stay, number of place-  
2 ment settings, case goal, and discharge reason  
3 of 17-year-olds who are surveyed by the Na-  
4 tional Youth in Transition Database and an  
5 analysis of the comparison of that description  
6 with the reasons for entry and foster care expe-  
7 riences of children of other ages who exit from  
8 foster care before attaining age 17.

9 “(B) A description of the characteristics of  
10 the individuals who report poor outcomes at  
11 ages 19 and 21 to the National Youth in Tran-  
12 sition Database.

13 “(C) Benchmarks for determining what  
14 constitutes a poor outcome for youth who re-  
15 main in or have exited from foster care and  
16 plans the executive branch will take to incor-  
17 porate these benchmarks in efforts to evaluate  
18 child welfare agency performance in providing  
19 services to children transitioning from foster  
20 care.

21 “(D) An analysis of the association be-  
22 tween types of placement, number of overall  
23 placements, time spent in foster care, and other  
24 factors, and outcomes at ages 19 and 21.

1           “(E) An analysis of the differences in out-  
2           comes for children in and formerly in foster  
3           care at age 19 and 21 among States.”.

4           (e) CLARIFYING DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED TO  
5 FOSTER YOUTH LEAVING FOSTER CARE.—Section  
6 475(5)(I) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 675(5)(I)) is amended  
7 by inserting after “REAL ID Act of 2005” the following:  
8 “, and any official documentation necessary to prove that  
9 the child was previously in foster care”.

Passed the House of Representatives June 20, 2017.

Attest:

*Clerk.*

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1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

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