

# **Summary of the “*Preventing Sex Trafficking and Improving Opportunities for Youth in Foster Care Act*”**

## **December 20, 2013**

The *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Improving Opportunities for Youth in Foster Care Act* would require states to take steps to identify, prevent, and address sex trafficking of youth in foster care. This legislation would also improve the lives of youth in foster care by ensuring they have more normal teen opportunities and experiences, while also providing them with the tools they need to become successful adults. Below is a list of the major provisions of the bill.

- 1. Require states to develop procedures for identifying victims of child sex trafficking and for determining the appropriate services for the child.**
  - a. States must develop methods to screen and identify victims of child sex trafficking and those who are at risk of becoming victims, including by demonstrating they are providing relevant training for caseworkers. (Section 101)
  - b. States must report children identified as victims of sex trafficking within 24 hours to the National Crime Information Center at the FBI, describe how they will provide services to victims (including how they coordinate efforts across agencies), and make information on services available to the public. (Section 102)
  - c. States would be required to implement plans to rapidly locate a child missing from foster care, determine why the child ran away from care, and determine whether the child was a victim of sex trafficking while missing from care. (Section 103)
  
- 2. Improve data on child sex trafficking and children living in group homes.**
  - a. HHS must report to Congress information on children who run away from foster care, state efforts to provide services to child victims of sex trafficking, and state efforts to ensure children in foster care maintain long-lasting connections to caring adults. (Section 104)
  - b. States must submit data on child sex trafficking victims through the existing data system used to collect information on youth in foster care. (Section 301)
  - c. HHS must report information on children living in group homes as part of the annual report on outcomes for children in foster care. (Section 302)
  
- 3. Ensure youth in foster care can lead more normal lives to deter sex trafficking.**
  - a. States must implement a “reasonable and prudent parent” standard, allowing foster parents to make more day-to-day decisions for youth in their care (such as allowing them to play sports or spend time with friends). (Section 201)
  
- 4. Ensure states do more to quickly move kids out of foster care.**
  - a. For children under age 16, states could no longer designate long-term foster care as a goal for a child (called “Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement” or APPLA), a status which indicates the state does not plan to return the child home, place them in an adoptive home, with a relative, or with a legal guardian. For children age 16 and older who have long-term foster care as a goal, states must document ongoing efforts to place children in a permanent home and explain why other options are not in the best interests of the child. (Section 202)
  
- 5. Ensure youth in foster care are better prepared for a successful adulthood.**
  - a. Youth in foster care age 14 or older would be allowed to help develop their own case plan, and the youth would select individuals to be part of the team preparing their plan. (Section 203)
  - b. States must ensure youth age 14 or older leaving foster care have a birth certificate, Social Security card, and bank account. (Section 204)