



H.R. 7343, *Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act* Rep. Max Miller (R-OH), Rep. Dwight Evans (D-PA)

Background:

- Chafee **Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs)** provide current and former foster youth with up to **\$5,000 per year to attend postsecondary education** or vocational programs.
- ETVs are primarily used to offset costs of attendance at four year universities, yet many youth express an interest in pursuing alternative career pathways such as **trade schools or short-term workforce training programs**. In addition, some foster youth need access to **remedial education** before they can pursue higher education.
- According to the Government Accountability Office, in FY2022, **28 states returned more than \$6.3 million in unused ETV funds**, despite the need from foster youth. Some states have cited statutory barriers imposing limitations on where vouchers can be used as reason for returning ETV funds.

H.R.7343, *Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act*:

- Clarifies use of ETVs to include attendance at a community college.
- Expands allowable use of funds to include **short-term workforce training programs** that meet Workforce Pell quality standards.
- Expands allowable use of funds to include costs associated with participation in an **apprenticeship program, obtaining a general equivalency degree, or remedial education**. Allows a youth utilizing ETVs for remedial education an extra year of eligibility to receive the voucher for up to six years (versus five years).
- Codifies provisions in the “**Fostering the Future for American Children and Families**” Executive Order, championed by **First Lady Melania Trump**, which calls for increasing flexibility in ETVs for “short-term, career-focused, and credential awarding programs.”

Endorsed By: More than 150 national, state, and local organizations including Journey to Success, Think of Us, iFoster, Child Welfare League of America, FosterClub, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Foster Youth Institute, and Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.