



## **H.R. 7432, *Fostering the Future Act***

### **Background:**

- The **John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood** (“Chafee”) supports current and former foster youth, age 14 to 21, transitioning to independence and adulthood.
- In addition, Chafee’s **Education and Training Vouchers** (ETVs) provide current and former foster youth with up to \$5,000 per year for postsecondary education.
- **Nearly 16,000 foster youth “age out”** of the child welfare system annually, often without permanent connections to family and face significant challenges in their path to independence:
  - **8% to 12% earn a two- or four-year degree** by their mid-20s compared to 49% of their peers.
  - **35% experience homelessness** at age 21 compared to 4% of the general population.
  - **56% to 85% earn a high school diploma** or general equivalency degree compared to 95% of their peers.

### **H.R. 7432, *Fostering the Future Act, as amended:***

- Makes **the first comprehensive reforms to Chafee since its creation in 1999** to improve outcomes for youth aging out of foster care by creating stronger connections to housing, education and workforce programs, and other critical supports.
- **Codifies several priorities included in the Executive Order, “Fostering the Future for American Children and Families,”** championed by First Lady Melania Trump.
- Strengthens alignment with **Federal housing programs** such as the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) housing voucher.
- Expands ETVs for **short-term workforce training programs**, costs associated with earning a high school diploma, apprenticeships, or **remedial education**.
- Increases the maximum ETV cap from **\$5,000 to \$12,000 while maintaining current funding levels** and provides greater educational support for foster youth.
- Expands access to **legal services** for foster youth and connects parenting foster youth with evidence-based **Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting** services.
- Prioritizes the importance of **lifelong connections** by updating Chafee’s purposes.

**Endorsed by:** More than 150 national, state, and local organizations, as well as more than 320 foster youth and caregivers.