



H.R. 5524 – RECONNECTING HOMELESS YOUTH ACT OF 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5524 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative John Yarmouth (D-KY) on March 4, 2008. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor, but was never considered.

H.R. 5524 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on June 9, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 5524 amends the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (P.L. 93-415) to revise requirements for services provided under grants from the Secretary of Health and Human Services for centers for runaway and homeless youth. H.R. 5524 also redefines age limits of homeless youth served under the Act to include 21 year-olds.

The bill increases grant allotments for states to \$150,000 and specified U.S. territories to \$70,000. The bill also requires plans proposed by grant applicants for a runaway and homeless youth center to include an emergency preparedness plan. The Secretary is required within two years of enactment to issue standards of performance for public and nonprofit private entities that receive such grants.

This bill limits the length of stay in centers for runaway and homeless youth to 15 days, unless it is located in a state or locality with a licensure law or regulation that permits a longer length of stay. H.R. 5524 also revises requirements for transitional living programs to provide for a length of stay of 635 days, under certain conditions.

H.R. 5524 requires the Secretary to report to Congress within two years of enactment and every five years thereafter with estimates of the incidence and prevalence of runaway and homeless individuals between 13 to 25 years of age.

This legislation further requires the Secretary to conduct a national homeless youth awareness campaign aimed at preventing runaway and homeless situations among youth in the United States and increasing awareness of individuals about the issues facing youth in runaway and homeless situations.

H.R. 5524 authorizes appropriations of \$150 million for 2009 and such sums as may be necessary for 2010-2013 for the Department's grants and the national media campaign.

BACKGROUND

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (P.L. 93-415) authorized four main services to be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Basic Center Program provides grants to establish and strengthen community-based programs addressing the needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. The Transitional Living Program provides grants for long-term assistance to homeless youth, ages 16 to 21, who are unable to return to their families but are not yet equipped to live on their own. The Act also authorized a National Runaway Switchboard telephone hotline, as well as a Street Outreach Program to fund local service providers that conduct street-based education and outreach and offer shelter and related services to young people who have been, or who are at risk of being, sexually abused.

Approximately 1.6 million youth experience homelessness or runaway episodes each year in the United States. In addition, about 63% of runaway and homeless children are never reported or sought after by their parents or guardian. Homeless adolescents often suffer from severe anxiety, depression, and poor



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

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health. Such youth also face difficulties attending schools, due to lack of residency, guardianship and proper documentation.

[Department of Health and Human Services - Family and Youth Services website](#)

COST

The Congressional Budget Office has not produced a Cost Estimate for H.R. 5524 as of June 7, 2008.

STAFF CONTACT

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