

February 3, 2020

Honorable Chuck Grassley
Chairman
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: S. 3025 - The Increasing Opportunities for Former Foster Youth Act

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Wyden:

As leaders from States and local governments, national early childhood, elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, youth development, foster care, and maternal infant care, and evidence-based policy-making organizations as well as research and technical assistance organizations that support the use of evidence, we are writing today to offer our strong support for the Increasing Opportunities for Former Foster Youth Act (S. 3025), which you introduced on December 11, 2019. This bipartisan legislation would address the critical issue of improving services for older youth aging out of the foster care system.

In 2018, approximately 18,000 youth aged out of the foster care system across the United States. Yet, few programs exist to support their transition to independence, or to increase the knowledge of the effectiveness of these programs. Becoming independent is a critical stage in the life of any young person and we must ensure that the programs that support youth in this transition effectively prepare them for success.

S. 3025 would commit \$100 million over five years to support 10 to 15 programs each year aimed at helping older youth in foster care transition into adulthood. More specifically, this new federal grant program would award validation grants to local governments, State governments, or private service providers proposing to invest federal funds in interventions with preliminary evidence of effectiveness; development and replication grants to support interventions that are working to build causal levels of evidence and interventions with the strongest evidence of effectiveness.

The bipartisan Increasing Opportunities for Former Foster Youth Act will make great progress in building and using evidence of what works and innovative approaches to help youth who are transitioning to adulthood and independence, and will ensure that our investments produce positive changes in their well-being and life outcomes. Thank you for introducing this critical bill.

Sincerely,

Alliance College-Ready Public Schools
America Forward
Appletree Institute for Education Innovation
Arnold Ventures
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Braven
Campaign for Youth Justice
Center for Research & Reform in Education, Johns Hopkins University
Children & Families First
Children's Home & Aid
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
College Possible
Communities In Schools
Council of Family & Child Caring Agencies
CSH
Democrats for Education Reform Now
Education Reform Now Advocacy
Efficacy
Empirical Education Inc.
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Ties Enterprises Inc.
Forum for Youth Investment
FosterClub
Friends of the Children
GreenLight Fund
IDEA Public Schools
Jankowski Associates, Inc.
Kempe Center and Foundation
Knowledge Alliance
Marzano Research
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
MercyFirst
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
National Crittenton
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives
New Profit
Nurse-Family Partnership
Pace Center for Girls
PeerForward
Project Evident
Research Institute for Key Indicators
Results for America
Social Finance
Social Innovation Research Center
StriveTogether
Success for All Foundation
The Dibble Institute
Third Sector
Unfolding Directions

Year Up

Youth Villages

Karen Anderson, Former Chief of Staff, President's Council of Economic Advisors, and Senior Director of Policy & Communications, Becker Friedman Institute, University of Chicago

Lynn Cominsky, Professor, Sonoma State University

Jenny Durkan, Mayor, City of Seattle

Ron Haskins, Former Co-Chair, Evidence-Based Policy Commission, and Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Jim Kohlmoos, Former Executive Director, National Association of State Boards of Education, and Partner, EDGE Consulting Partners

Kathy Stack, Former Deputy Associate Director, Education, Income Maintenance and Labor, White House Office of Management and Budget

Jessie Watrous, Evidence-Based Program Director, University of Maryland, Institute for Innovation and Implementation