

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 509

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to support the rights of youth in the foster care system.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 14, 2023

Mr. CLEAVER (for himself, Mr. BACON, Ms. BROWN, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. EVANS, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRJALVA, Mrs. HOUCHIN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. McCLELLAN, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PORTER, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SEWELL, and Mr. HILL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to support the rights of youth in the foster care system.

Whereas a 2016 report from the American Bar Association found that only 50 percent of foster children graduate from high school;

Whereas a report from the First Star Institute gave 11 States “D” or “F” grades on their legal rights for foster youth;

Whereas a Casey Family Programs study of foster children in Oregon and Washington revealed that one-third of foster youth reported abuse by their foster parent or another household adult;

Whereas a study from the Department of Health and Human Services found that Black, brown, and indigenous children are overrepresented in the foster system and less likely to be adopted than other children, and nearly 90 percent of foster youth have experienced trauma;

Whereas experts agree that social workers offer critical support to both foster youth and families, ensuring a healthy living environment;

Whereas a Johns Hopkins University study found that foster children in group homes are 28 times more likely to be sexually abused than other children;

Whereas a National Institutes of Health study found that extensive informed consent requirements for low-risk activities may leave foster children at a higher risk for poor physical and mental health outcomes;

Whereas a 2018 analysis from the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) found that only 54 percent of insured foster youth received mental health treatment after experiencing a depressive episode; and

Whereas a 2015 Journal of Public Child Welfare report found that sibling separation exacerbates trauma and slows adjustment to their new home: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that foster youth should have the—

1 (1) right to receive an education and remain in
2 their original school, if desired;

3 (2) right to participate in extracurricular, cul-
4 tural, and social activities appropriate to the youth's
5 age and developmental needs;

6 (3) right to receive needed health services, in-
7 cluding medical, dental, vision, and mental health
8 services;

9 (4) right to freedom from abuse, neglect, or
10 corporal punishment;

11 (5) right to be represented by, and speak to, a
12 guardian or attorney ad litem;

13 (6) right to adequate and healthy food, ade-
14 quate clothing, and a safe and comfortable living en-
15 vironment;

16 (7) right to freedom from discrimination based
17 on race, gender, religion, or disability;

18 (8) right to have continued contact with sib-
19 lings, if desired;

20 (9) right to regular or at least reasonable con-
21 tact with their assigned caseworker or an employee
22 of the agency responsible for their child welfare serv-
23 ices; and

24 (10) right to be informed of their rights.

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