



Establishing Kinship as Foster Care Prevention Program SB39 (Favola)/HB27 Callsen

The Problem: Virginia lacks a formal Kinship Prevention program which results in children and youth unnecessarily entering the foster care system and enduring the trauma of foster care.

Virginia has spent years working towards focusing more on prevention of children entering foster care and it is time to formally implement that program.

Kinship families need financial and other supports to be able to care for their relative children. Research shows children who are placed with relatives or kin are more likely to have more stability and better life outcomes than those placed with strangers.

The Solution: Creating a Kinship as Foster Care Prevention Program will allow more at-risk children to be placed with relatives and kin and fewer children entering into foster care, increasing permanency for children. This will also allow Virginia to more easily identify the number of children being diverted from foster care into kinship care and ensure their placements remain safe, stable and supported by the local departments of social services.

Budget Amendment:

Item 329 #4s Favola – SB39; Item 329 #4h Callsen – HB27

Establishes and supports the Kinship as Foster Care Prevention Program

FY 25 \$7 million GF; FY26 \$18 million GF

Contact: Cassie Baudean Plevelich: cassie@chsva.org, 804-353-0191, ext. 334

Extending Foster Futures Eligibility from Age 21 to Age 23

HB1313 (Tata)

The Problem: Virginia has between 450 – 600 youth who age out of foster care each year. Studies show that youth with foster care experience are more likely to become homeless, incarcerated, and un-employed or under-employed. Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative estimates that this costs society an average of \$300,000 per youth.

Virginia has been supporting many youth who have aged out of foster care through the Fostering Futures program until youth turn age 21 and are no longer eligible for those transitional supports.

Many youth are not yet prepared by age 21 to be fully independent regardless of their childhood experiences and whether they have a stable, supportive family. Very few youth have even graduated college by age 21, much less obtained long-term sustainable employment, and are typically still supported, at least in part, by their families.

Youth who have aged out of foster care have sustained significant childhood trauma and need even more supports during the transitional period into adulthood. Unfortunately, it is also often youth who have aged out of foster care who do not receive any familial support, financially or otherwise.

The Solution: Extending the supports of the Fostering Futures program to youth until they turn age 23 will allow youth more time to attain their educational goals, obtain sustainable employment and find stable, long-term housing. By extending supports by just 2 years, this can significantly impact the long-term life outcomes of youth who have aged out of foster care.

This can impact rates of incarceration, homelessness and the rates at which youth are able to obtain 4-year college degrees and maintain employment at a level that provides them self-sufficiency in adulthood. Investing in youth from ages 21 through 23 is an investment in the rest of their lives.

Budget Amendment:

Item 329 #5h Tata – HB1313

FY25 \$9.2 million GF/FY26 \$18.6 million GF

Contact: Cassie Baudean Plevelich: cassie@chsva.org , 804-353-0191, ext. 334