

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1033

To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award competitive grants to enhance collaboration between State child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2021

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award competitive grants to enhance collaboration between State child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Childhood Outcomes
5 Need New Efficient Community Teams” or the “CON-
6 NECT Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO AWARD COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO**
 2 **ENHANCE COLLABORATION BETWEEN STATE**
 3 **CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE**
 4 **SYSTEMS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 1 of part B of title IV
 6 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) is
 7 amended by adding at the end the following new section:

8 **“SEC. 429A. GRANTS TO STATES TO ENHANCE COLLABORA-**
 9 **TION BETWEEN STATE CHILD WELFARE AND**
 10 **JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS.**

11 “(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to au-
 12 thorize the Secretary, in collaboration with the Attorney
 13 General and the Administrator of the Office of Juvenile
 14 Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the Department of
 15 Justice, to make grants to State child welfare and juvenile
 16 justice agencies to collaborate in the collection of data re-
 17 lating to dual status youth and to develop practices, poli-
 18 cies, and protocols to confront the challenges presented
 19 and experienced by dual status youth.

20 “(b) AUTHORITY TO AWARD GRANTS.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability
 22 of appropriations, from amounts reserved under sec-
 23 tion 423(a)(2) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall
 24 award competitive grants jointly to a State child wel-
 25 fare agency and a State juvenile justice agency to
 26 facilitate or enhance collaboration between the child

1 welfare and juvenile justice systems of the State in
2 order to carry out programs to address the needs of
3 dual status youth and their families.

4 “(2) LENGTH OF GRANTS.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A grant shall be
6 awarded under this section for a period of not
7 less than 2, and not more than 5, fiscal years,
8 subject to subparagraph (B).

9 “(B) EXTENSION OF GRANT.—On applica-
10 tion of the grantee, the Secretary may extend
11 for not more than 2 fiscal years the period for
12 which a grant is awarded under this section.

13 “(c) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

14 “(1) APPLICATION.—In order for a State to be
15 eligible for a grant under this section, it shall submit
16 an application, to be approved by the Secretary, that
17 includes—

18 “(A) a description of the proposed leader-
19 ship collaboration group (including the member-
20 ship of such group), and how such group will
21 manage and oversee a review and analysis of
22 current practices while working to jointly ad-
23 dress enhanced practices to improve outcomes
24 for dual status youth;

1 “(B) a description of how the State pro-
2 poses to—

3 “(i) identify dual status youths;

4 “(ii) identify individuals who are at
5 risk of becoming dual status youths;

6 “(iii) identify common characteristics
7 shared by dual status youths in the State;
8 and

9 “(iv) determine the prevalence of dual
10 status youths in the State;

11 “(C) a description of current and proposed
12 practices and procedures that the State intends
13 to use to—

14 “(i) screen and assess dual status
15 youths for risks and treatment needs;

16 “(ii) provide targeted and evidence-
17 based services, including educational, be-
18 havioral health, and pro-social treatment
19 interventions for dual status youths and
20 their families; and

21 “(iii) provide for a lawful process to
22 enhance or ensure the abilities of the State
23 and any relevant agencies to share infor-
24 mation and data about dual status youths
25 while maintaining confidentiality and pri-

1 vacy protections under State and Federal
2 law; and

3 “(D) a certification that the State has in-
4 volved local governments, as appropriate, in the
5 development, expansion, modification, oper-
6 ation, or improvement of proposed policy and
7 practice reforms to address the needs of dual
8 status youths.

9 “(2) NO SUPPLANTATION OF OTHER FUNDS.—
10 Any amounts paid to a State under a grant under
11 this section shall be used to supplement and not
12 supplant other State expenditures on dual status
13 youths or children involved with either the child wel-
14 fare or juvenile justice systems.

15 “(3) EVALUATION.—Up to 10 percent of the
16 amount made available to carry out this section for
17 a fiscal year shall be made available to the Secretary
18 to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects funded
19 under this section, using a methodology that—

20 “(A) includes random assignment when-
21 ever feasible, or other research methods that
22 allow for the strongest possible causal infer-
23 ences when random assignment is not feasible;
24 and

1 “(B) generates evidence on the impact of
2 specific projects, or groups of projects with
3 identical (or similar) practices and procedures.

4 “(4) REPORT.—A State child welfare agency
5 and a State juvenile justice agency receiving a grant
6 under this section shall jointly submit to the Sec-
7 retary, the Attorney General, and the Administrator
8 of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
9 Prevention of the Department of Justice, a report
10 on the evaluation of the activities carried out under
11 the grant at the end of each fiscal year during the
12 period of the grant. Such report shall include—

13 “(A) a description of the scope and nature
14 of the dual status youth population in the
15 State, including the number of dual status
16 youth;

17 “(B) a description of the evidence-based
18 practices and procedures used by the agencies
19 to carry out the activities described in clauses
20 (i) through (iii) of paragraph (1)(C); and

21 “(C) an analysis of the effects of such
22 practices and procedures, including information
23 regarding—

24 “(i) the collection of data related to
25 individual dual status youths;

1 “(ii) aggregate data related to the
2 dual status youth population, including—

3 “(I) characteristics of dual status
4 youths in the State;

5 “(II) case processing timelines;
6 and

7 “(III) information related to case
8 management, the provision of targeted
9 services, and placements within the
10 foster care or juvenile justice system;
11 and

12 “(iii) the extent to which such prac-
13 tices and procedures have contributed to—

14 “(I) improved educational out-
15 comes for dual status youths;

16 “(II) fewer delinquency referrals
17 for dual status youths;

18 “(III) shorter stays in intensive
19 restrictive placements for dual status
20 youths; or

21 “(IV) such other outcomes for
22 dual status youths as the State child
23 welfare agency and State juvenile jus-
24 tice agency may identify.

1 “(d) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The
2 Secretary may support State child welfare agencies and
3 State juvenile justice agencies by offering a program, de-
4 veloped in consultation with organizations and agencies
5 with subject matter expertise, of training and technical as-
6 sistance to assist such agencies in developing programs
7 and protocols that draw on best practices for serving dual
8 status youth in order to facilitate or enhance—

9 “(1) collaboration between State child welfare
10 agencies and State juvenile justice agencies; and

11 “(2) the effectiveness of such agencies with re-
12 spect to working with Federal agencies and child
13 welfare and juvenile justice agencies from other
14 States.

15 “(e) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
16 of enactment of this section, and every 3 years thereafter,
17 the Secretary, the Attorney General, and the Adminis-
18 trator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency
19 Prevention of the Department of Justice shall jointly sub-
20 mit to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on
21 the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on Ways
22 and Means and the Committee on Education and Labor
23 of the House of Representatives, a report on the grants
24 provided under this section.

25 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 “(1) DUAL STATUS YOUTH.—The term ‘dual
2 status youth’ means a child who has come into con-
3 tact with both the child welfare and juvenile justice
4 systems and occupies various statuses in terms of
5 the individual’s relationship to such systems.

6 “(2) LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION GROUP.—
7 The term ‘leadership collaboration group’ means a
8 group composed of senior officials from the State
9 child welfare agency, the State juvenile justice agen-
10 cy, and other relevant youth and family-serving pub-
11 lic agencies and private organizations, including, to
12 the extent practicable, representatives from the
13 State judiciary branch.

14 “(3) STATE JUVENILE JUSTICE AGENCY.—The
15 term ‘State juvenile justice agency’ means the agen-
16 cy of the State or Indian tribe responsible for ad-
17 ministering grant funds awarded under the Juvenile
18 Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (34
19 U.S.C. 11101 et seq.).

20 “(4) STATE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY.—The
21 term ‘State child welfare agency’ means the State
22 agency responsible for administering the program
23 under this subpart, or, in the case of a tribal organi-
24 zation that is receiving payments under section 428,

1 the tribal agency responsible for administering such
2 program.”.

3 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 423(a) of
4 such Act (42 U.S.C. 623(a)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking “The sum appropriated” and in-
6 serting the following:

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
8 the sum appropriated”; and

9 (2) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(2) GRANTS TO STATES TO ENHANCE COL-
11 LABORATION BETWEEN STATE CHILD WELFARE AND
12 JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEMS.—For each fiscal year
13 beginning with fiscal year 2022 for which the
14 amount appropriated under section 425 for the fiscal
15 year exceeds \$270,000,000—

16 “(A) the Secretary shall reserve from such
17 excess amount such sums as are necessary for
18 making grants under section 429A for such fis-
19 cal year; and

20 “(B) the remainder to be applied under
21 paragraph (1) for purposes of making allot-
22 ments to States for such fiscal year shall be de-
23 termined after the Secretary first allots
24 \$70,000 to each State under such paragraph

- 1 and reserves such sums under subparagraph
- 2 (A) of this paragraph.”.

