



SR0422

LRB101 12464 ALS 60634 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The Family First Prevention Services Act was signed into law as part of the Bipartisan Budget act on February 9, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, Young people involved in the child welfare system do best in families, in a safe and stable environment that supports their long-term well-being, according to research; the passage of Family First took a large step toward this vision by restructuring how the federal government spends money on child welfare to ensure that more children in foster care are placed with families; the law also provides more support for critical services, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment, in-home training, and family therapy that can help prevent the need for foster care in the first place; and

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WHEREAS, The law provides an opportunity for positive change and supports ongoing efforts to transform our child welfare system by keeping children and teens safely with their own family and to avoid the often-traumatizing experience of unnecessary placement into the foster care system; its name reflects the elements of the legislation: a family first for children and teens with prevention services to keep kids safe and growing up in their family; prevention services, including in-home, skills-based training for parents, mental health

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1 care, including family therapy, and substance abuse and
2 treatment programs are important parts of Family First; when
3 the courts determine that children need to enter foster care,
4 Family First specifically calls for them to be placed in the
5 least restrictive, most family-like setting to meet their
6 individual needs; the law recognizes that treatment programs
7 can provide short-term, customized therapeutic support while
8 kids are living in families; this could be with birth parents,
9 other relatives, close friends, or foster caregivers;
10 residential treatment may be needed for short-term
11 stabilization, usually less than 90 days, with follow-up
12 services when children return to their family;
13 federally-reimbursed services are meant to support and
14 strengthen families, so children don't enter care; they are
15 also meant to maintain child and family connections when
16 children enter foster care or require short-term residential
17 treatment, and they provide six months of aftercare when a
18 child has transitioned home from either setting; the focus is
19 on helping children and families live and grow together safely
20 and successfully; and

21 WHEREAS, This Act reforms the federal child welfare
22 financing streams, Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the Social
23 Security Act, to provide services to families who are at risk
24 of entering the child welfare system; and

1 WHEREAS, This Act aims to prevent children from entering
2 foster care by allowing federal reimbursement for mental health
3 services, substance use treatment, and in-home parenting skill
4 training; it also seeks to improve the well-being of children
5 already in foster care by motivating states to reduce placement
6 of children in congregate care; and

7 WHEREAS, With an approved Title IV-E plan, the State would
8 have the option to use Title IV-E funds to prevent the
9 placement of children and youth into the foster care system and
10 to provide up to 12 months of mental health services, substance
11 abuse treatment, and in-home parenting training to families at
12 risk of entry into the child welfare system; additionally, the
13 State could use Title IV-E reimbursement for up to 12 months
14 for a child who has been placed with a parent in a licensed
15 residential family-based treatment facility for substance
16 abuse, regardless of whether the child meets the AFDC
17 income-eligibility requirement for Title IV-E; and

18 WHEREAS, A competitive grant for recruitment and retention
19 of high-quality foster families is provided and made available
20 through 2022; parameters for states to expand funding
21 eligibility for youth "aging out" of foster care are provided;
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23 WHEREAS, Decreasing the number of children newly enrolled

1 in the foster care system by providing federally-reimbursable
2 services to families at risk of entering the child welfare
3 system will benefit the State of Illinois; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge the State to
6 support the Family First Prevention Services Act to help
7 decrease the number of children entered into foster care.