

HOUSE BILL No. 5590

February 24, 2004, Introduced by Reps. Clack, Spade, Plakas, Vagnozzi, Gleason, Condino, Accavitti, Smith, Law, Hopgood, Murphy, Cheeks, Tobocman, Sheltroun, Adamini, Brown, Williams, Kolb, Jannick, Minore, McConico, Phillips, Richardville, Stallworth, Reeves, Woodward, Zelenko, Hune, Waters, Bieda, Meisner, Sak, Farrah, Hager, Voorhees, Vander Veen, Wojno, Hardman and Daniels and referred to the Committee on Family and Children Services.

A bill to establish the foster care independence program; to provide certain services for certain youth in foster care due to child abuse or child neglect; and to prescribe the duties of certain state departments.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. (1) This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "foster care independence act".

3 (2) A young adult is eligible for services under this act if
4 he or she is or has been in a foster care placement through the
5 state of Michigan based on child abuse or child neglect on or
6 after his or her fourteenth birthday.

7 (3) A young adult is not eligible for services under this act
8 if 1 or more of the following apply:

9 (a) The young adult is in an out-of-home placement solely as
10 an adjudicated delinquent. However, if the youth is currently an

1 adjudicated delinquent but met the eligibility criteria before
2 his or her adjudication, services may be provided under this act
3 after the delinquency case is closed.

4 (b) The young adult was never in an out-of-home placement
5 based on child abuse or child neglect.

6 (c) The young adult is in a detention facility or other
7 state-operated facility.

8 (4) Services under this act shall be provided to eligible
9 young adults 14 years of age and older regardless of the
10 permanency planning goal. Services under this act shall be
11 available to all eligible young adults after case closure through
12 20 years of age. Services under this act shall be provided on an
13 "as-needed" basis.

14 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

15 (a) "Adjudicated delinquent" means an individual found to
16 have committed an offense that, if committed by an adult, would
17 be a criminal offense.

18 (b) "Child abuse" and "child neglect" mean those terms as
19 defined in section 2 of the child protection law, 1975 PA 238,
20 MCL 722.622.

21 (c) "Department" means the family independence agency.

22 (d) "Foster care" means 24-hour substitute care for children
23 placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the state
24 agency has placement and care responsibility. Foster care
25 placement includes, but is not limited to, placement in foster
26 family homes, child care institutions, and preadoptive
27 placements.

1 (e) "Young adult" means an individual aged 14 years but less
2 than 21 years of age.

3 Sec. 3. (1) The department shall establish the foster care
4 independence program to offer education, training, employment,
5 and financial support for young adults leaving foster care.

6 (2) It is the intent of the legislature to create a program
7 to do all of the following:

8 (a) Identify young adults who are likely to remain in foster
9 care until 18 years of age and help these children make the
10 transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as
11 assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career
12 exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention,
13 training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and
14 financial management skills, substance abuse prevention, and
15 preventive health activities, including smoking avoidance,
16 nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention.

17 (b) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care
18 until 18 years of age receive education, training, and services
19 necessary to obtain employment.

20 (c) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care
21 until 18 years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary
22 training and education institutions.

23 (d) Provide personal and emotional support to children aging
24 out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of
25 interactions with dedicated adults.

26 (e) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment,
27 education, and other appropriate support and services to former

1 foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to
2 complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to
3 assure that program participants recognize and accept their
4 personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the
5 transition from adolescence to adulthood.

6 Sec. 4. (1) The department shall provide at least all of
7 the following goods and services to eligible young adults in the
8 foster care independence program:

9 (a) Services that are not available from other funding
10 sources or agencies for eligible young adults currently in the
11 foster care system and for young adults released from foster care
12 before reaching 21 years of age.

13 (b) Educational support.

14 (c) Classes or groups on interpersonal communication and
15 building and maintaining relationships and classes or groups on
16 independent living skills.

17 (d) Stipends to cover the cost of utility deposits, security
18 deposits, and first month's rent to eligible young adults who are
19 leaving foster care or have left foster care because they have
20 reached 18 years of age but have not reached 21 years of age.
21 The first month's rent and damage deposit may only be provided to
22 young adults 18 to 21 years of age who are leaving foster care or
23 who have left foster care because they attained 18 or 19 years of
24 age and have not reached 21 years of age.

25 (2) The department shall make known a list of goods and
26 services provided under the program established in this act.

27 Sec. 5. The department may provide goods and services

1 allowed under federal law and any other goods and services the
2 department considers appropriate.