

July 3, 2018

The Honorable Mike Turner
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Turner,

We, the undersigned organizations, representing a broad spectrum of housing, homelessness, children's, and child welfare organizations, write to oppose the *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2017*, despite modifications to the bill. While we share your goal of helping our most vulnerable – including youth aging out of the foster system – find stable and safe housing, we remain deeply concerned that the bill would impose new burdens – the first ever for individuals who rely on federal housing assistance – including work, education, training, and self-sufficiency requirements. The modifications made to the bill do not cure its significant flaws.

As currently written, the *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act* directs public housing agencies to impose a combination of work, education, and training or self-sufficiency requirements on youth aging out of the foster care system as a condition of receiving housing assistance. The bill no longer expressly requires youth to work a set number of hours each week to maintain their housing assistance, however, the HUD Secretary could establish hourly education and training requirements through regulation. As an alternative to imposing education and training requirements, public housing agencies would be required under the bill to make participation in HUD's Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) programs mandatory for youth as a conditioning of receiving housing assistance.

While the bill provides a grace period for individuals who are unable to meet these requirements, the *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act* sets a troubling and unacceptable precedent. Federal housing programs help prevent homelessness and housing poverty and requiring households to meet new eligibility requirements is counterproductive to this purpose.

While we applaud your efforts to help provide critical supports to a population whose needs have for too long been forgotten, the *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act* remains significantly flawed, despite modifications. Without further changes, we must oppose the *Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Act of 2017*.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Public Interest Law
Ceres Policy Research
Children's Advocacy Institute
Child Welfare League of America
Coalition on Human Needs
Corporation for Supportive Housing

Housing Assistance Council
Kids in Crisis
Justice For Families
Legal Action Center
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Housing Trust
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Women's Law Center
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Spectrum Youth Family Services
Technical Assistance Collaborative
The Arc of the United States
The National Crittenton Foundation
True Colors Fund
Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs

CC:

Rep. Jeb Hensarling, Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee;
Rep. Maxine Waters, Ranking Member of the House Financial Services Committee;
Rep. Sean Duffy, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance; and
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance.