

Hon. Darin LaHood
Chair
Subcommittee on Work and Welfare
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

Hon. Danny Davis
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Work and Welfare
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means

April 15, 2026

Subject: Support for Bipartisan Chafee Modernization Package and Ongoing Partnership

Dear Chairman LaHood, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and its affinity group the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA), we write to express our support for the bipartisan package of six bills to modernize the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood.

We commend the Committee for the comprehensive package that includes:

- The Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act (H.R. 7343)
- The Foster Youth Postsecondary Education Access and Success Act (H.R. 7463)
- Foster Youth Housing Opportunity Act (H.R. 7432):
- The Support for Expectant and Parenting Foster Youth Act (H.R. 7655)
- The Fresh Starts for Foster Youth Act (H.R. 7529)
- The Chafee Opportunities for New Networks and Existing Connection Trust (CONNECT) Act (H.R. 7995)

State and local child welfare leaders deeply value the Committee's leadership in advancing these proposals, which reflect a meaningful commitment to improving outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care. The Chafee program remains a critical support for youth ages 14 to 21 as they navigate housing, education, employment, and other essential aspects of adulthood.

Importantly, this legislative package closely aligns with recommendations advanced by APHSA and NAPCWA, informed by extensive engagement with state and local leaders and young people with lived experience. Across our work, leaders have consistently emphasized the need for strengthened housing supports, improved access to education and training, enhanced coordination across systems, and more flexible, youth-centered service delivery. The proposals included in this package reflect these shared priorities and represent a meaningful step toward translating them into policy.

At the same time, we respectfully encourage continued partnership with the Committee to ensure that the promise of these reforms can be fully realized in practice.

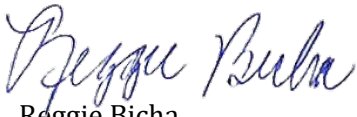
As new opportunities and flexibilities are introduced, it will be essential to ensure that funding levels and program capacity keep pace with the expanded expectations placed on state and local agencies. Without sufficient investment, there is a risk that implementation challenges could limit the reach and impact of these important reforms.

In addition, we welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to support thoughtful implementation of these changes. We encourage a focus on clear, consistent guidance and streamlined processes that minimize additional administrative burden on states and local jurisdictions. Doing so will allow agencies to focus their efforts where they matter most—delivering services and supports to young people.

APHSA and NAPCWA stand ready to partner with the Committee, ACF, and stakeholders as this legislation moves forward. We are committed to working collaboratively to ensure these reforms translate into meaningful, sustainable improvements for youth transitioning from foster care.

Thank you again for your leadership and commitment to this critical population.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Reggie Bicha", is positioned above the printed name.

Reggie Bicha
President & CEO
American Public Human Services Association

