

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7419

To reauthorize the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 6, 2022

Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. WAGNER, and Mrs. LESKO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To reauthorize the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990,
and for other purposes.

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 “Victims of Child Abuse
5 Act Reauthorization Act of 2022”.

1 **SEC. 2. IMPROVING INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF**
2 **CHILD ABUSE CASES.**

3 The Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (34 U.S.C.
4 20301 et seq.) is amended—

5 (1) in section 211 (34 U.S.C. 20301)—

6 (A) in paragraph (1)—

7 (i) by striking “3,300,000” and in-
8 serting “3,400,000”; and

9 (ii) by striking “, and drug abuse is
10 associated with a significant portion of
11 these”;

12 (B) by redesignating paragraphs (3)
13 through (8) as paragraphs (4) through (9), re-
14 spectively;

15 (C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
16 lowing:

17 “(3) a key to a child victim healing from abuse
18 is access to supportive and healthy families and com-
19 munities;”; and

20 (D) in paragraph (9)(B), as so redesign-
21 ated, by inserting “, and operations of cen-
22 ters” before the period at the end;

23 (2) in section 212 (34 U.S.C. 20302)—

24 (A) in paragraph (5), by inserting “coordi-
25 nated team” before “response”; and

1 (B) in paragraph (8), by inserting “organi-
2 zational capacity” before “support”;

3 (3) in section 213 (34 U.S.C. 20303)—

4 (A) in subsection (a)—

5 (i) in the heading, by inserting “AND
6 MAINTENANCE” after “ESTABLISHMENT”;

7 (ii) in the matter preceding paragraph
8 (1)—

9 (I) by striking “, in coordination
10 with the Director of the Office of Vic-
11 tims of Crime,”; and

12 (II) by inserting “and maintain”
13 after “establish”;

14 (iii) in paragraph (3)—

15 (I) by striking “and victim advo-
16 cates” and inserting “victim advo-
17 cates, multidisciplinary team leader-
18 ship, and children’s advocacy center
19 staff”; and

20 (II) by striking “and” at the end;

21 (iv) by redesignating paragraph (4) as
22 paragraph (5);

23 (v) by inserting after paragraph (3)
24 the following:

“(4) provide technical assistance, training, coordination, and organizational capacity support for State chapters; and”; and

(vi) in paragraph (5), as so redesignated, by striking “and oversight to” and inserting “organizational capacity support, and oversight of”;

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and maintain” after “establish”; and

(II) in the matter following subparagraph (B), by striking “and technical assistance to aid communities in establishing” and inserting “training and technical assistance to aid communities in establishing and maintaining”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in subparagraph (A)—

(aa) in clause (ii), by inserting “Center” after “Advocacy”; and

1 (bb) in clause (iii), by strik-
2 ing “of, assessment of, and inter-
3 vention in” and inserting “and
4 intervention in child”; and

5 (II) in subparagraph (B), by
6 striking “centers and interested com-
7 munities” and inserting “centers, in-
8 terested communities, and chapters”;
9 and

10 (C) in subsection (c)—

11 (i) in paragraph (2)—

12 (I) in subparagraph (B), by
13 striking “evaluation, intervention, evi-
14 dence gathering, and counseling” and
15 inserting “investigation and interven-
16 tion in child abuse”; and

17 (II) in subparagraph (E), by
18 striking “judicial handling of child
19 abuse and neglect” and inserting
20 “multidisciplinary response to child
21 abuse”;

22 (ii) in paragraph (3)(A)(i), by striking
23 “so that communities can establish multi-
24 disciplinary programs that respond to child
25 abuse” and inserting “and chapters so that

1 communities can establish and maintain
 2 multidisciplinary programs that respond to
 3 child abuse and chapters can establish and
 4 maintain children’s advocacy centers in
 5 their State”;

6 (iii) in paragraph (4)(B)—

7 (I) in clause (iii), by striking
 8 “and” at the end;

9 (II) in by redesignating clause
 10 (iv) as clause (v); and

11 (III) by inserting after clause
 12 (iii) the following:

13 “(iv) best result in supporting chap-
 14 ters in each State; and”; and

15 (iv) in paragraph (6), by inserting
 16 “under this Act” after “recipients”;

17 (4) in section 214 (34 U.S.C. 20304)—

18 (A) by striking subsection (a) and insert-
 19 ing the following:

20 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall make
 21 grants to—

22 “(1) establish and maintain a network of care
 23 for child abuse victims where investigation, prosecu-
 24 tions, and interventions are continually occurring

1 and coordinating activities within local children’s ad-
2 vocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams;

3 “(2) develop, enhance, and coordinate multi-
4 disciplinary child abuse investigations, intervention,
5 and prosecution activities;

6 “(3) promote the effective delivery of the evi-
7 dence-based, trauma-informed Children’s Advocacy
8 Center Model and the multidisciplinary response to
9 child abuse; and

10 “(4) develop and disseminate practice standards
11 for care and best practices in programmatic evalua-
12 tion, and support State chapter organizational ca-
13 pacity and local children’s advocacy center organiza-
14 tional capacity and operations in order to meet such
15 practice standards and best practices.”;

16 (B) in subsection (b), by striking “, in co-
17 ordination with the Director of the Office of
18 Victims of Crime,”;

19 (C) in subsection (c)(2)—

20 (i) in subparagraph (C), by inserting
21 “to the greatest extent practicable, but in
22 no case later than 72 hours,” after
23 “hours”; and

24 (ii) by striking subparagraphs (D)
25 through (I) and inserting the following:

1 “(D) Forensic interviews of child victims
2 by trained personnel that are used by law en-
3 forcement, health, and child protective service
4 agencies to interview suspected abuse victims
5 about allegations of abuse.

6 “(E) Provision of needed follow up services
7 such as medical care, mental healthcare, and
8 victims advocacy services.

9 “(F) A requirement that, to the extent
10 practicable, all interviews and meetings with a
11 child victim occur at the children’s advocacy
12 center or an agency with which there is a link-
13 age agreement regarding the delivery of multi-
14 disciplinary child abuse investigation, prosecu-
15 tion, and intervention services.

16 “(G) Coordination of each step of the in-
17 vestigation process to eliminate duplicative fo-
18 rensic interviews with a child victim.

19 “(H) Designation of a director for the chil-
20 dren’s advocacy center.

21 “(I) Designation of a multidisciplinary
22 team coordinator.

23 “(J) Assignment of a volunteer or staff ad-
24 vocate to each child in order to assist the child
25 and, when appropriate, the child’s family,

1 throughout each step of intervention and judi-
2 cial proceedings.

3 “(K) Coordination with State chapters to
4 assist and provide oversight, and organizational
5 capacity that supports local children’s advocacy
6 centers, multidisciplinary teams, and commu-
7 nities working to implement a multidisciplinary
8 response to child abuse in the provision of evi-
9 dence-informed initiatives, including mental
10 health counseling, forensic interviewing, multi-
11 disciplinary team coordination, and victim adv-
12 eacy.

13 “(L) Such other criteria as the Adminis-
14 trator shall establish by regulation.”; and

15 (D) by striking subsection (f) and inserting
16 the following:

17 “(f) GRANTS TO STATE CHAPTERS FOR ASSISTANCE
18 TO LOCAL CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY CENTERS.—In award-
19 ing grants under this section, the Administrator shall en-
20 sure that a portion of the grants is distributed to State
21 chapters to enable State chapters to provide oversight,
22 training, and technical assistance to local centers on evi-
23 dence-informed initiatives including mental health, coun-
24 seling, forensic interviewing, multidisciplinary team co-
25 ordination, and victim advocacy.”;

1 (5) in section 214A (34 U.S.C. 20305)—

2 (A) in subsection (a)—

3 (i) in paragraph (1), by striking “at-
4 torneys and other allied” and inserting
5 “prosecutors and other attorneys and al-
6 lied”; and

7 (ii) in paragraph (2)(B), by inserting
8 “Center” after “Advocacy”; and

9 (B) in subsection (b)(1), by striking sub-
10 paragraph (A) and inserting the following:

11 “(A) a significant connection to prosecu-
12 tors who handle child abuse cases in State
13 courts, such as a membership organization or
14 support service providers; and”; and

15 (6) by striking section 214B (34 U.S.C. 20306)
16 and inserting the following:

17 **“SEC. 214B. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 “There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
19 sections 213, 214, and 214A, \$40,000,000 for each of fis-
20 cal years 2022 through 2028.”.

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