

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8789

To temporarily increase funding to the Court Improvement Program, to improve the ability of courts to conduct remote child welfare proceedings, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 9, 2022

Mr. MOORE of Utah introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

A BILL

To temporarily increase funding to the Court Improvement Program, to improve the ability of courts to conduct remote child welfare proceedings, 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 “Connecting Forever
5 Families Act of 2022”.

6 **SEC. 2. TEMPORARY ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE**
7 **COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 436 of the Social Security
9 Act (42 U.S.C. 629f) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a), by inserting “,
2 \$375,000,000 for each fiscal year in the 5-fiscal-year
3 period beginning with the 1st fiscal year beginning
4 after the effective date of the Connecting Forever
5 Families Act of 2022, and \$345,000,000 for each
6 succeeding fiscal year” before the period; and

7 (2) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting “until the
8 1st fiscal year beginning after the effective date of
9 the Connecting Forever Families Act of 2022,
10 \$60,000,000 for the grants for each fiscal year in
11 the 5-fiscal-year period beginning with the 1st fiscal
12 year after such effective date, and \$30,000,000 for
13 the grants for each succeeding fiscal year” before
14 the period.

15 (b) INDIAN TRIBES.—Section 438(c)(3) of such Act
16 (42 U.S.C. 629h(c)(3)) is amended by inserting “for each
17 fiscal year that begins before the effective date of the Con-
18 necting Forever Families Act of 2022, \$2,000,000 in the
19 case of the 1st 5 fiscal years that begin after such effective
20 date, and \$1,000,000 for each succeeding fiscal year,”
21 after “\$1,000,000”.

22 (c) OFFSET.—

23 (1) Effective on October 1 of the 1st fiscal year
24 beginning after the effective date of this Act, section
25 403(b)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 603(b)(2)) is

1 amended by striking “\$608,000,000” and inserting
 2 “\$448,000,000”.

3 (2) Effective on October 1 of the 2nd fiscal
 4 year beginning after such effective date, section
 5 403(b)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 603(b)(2)) is
 6 amended by striking “\$448,000,000” and inserting
 7 “\$618,000,000”.

8 (3) Effective on October 1 of the 3rd fiscal year
 9 beginning after such effective date, section 403(b)(2)
 10 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 603(b)(2)) is amended by
 11 striking “\$618,000,000” and inserting
 12 “\$608,000,000”.

13 **SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION THAT COURT IMPROVEMENT PRO-**
 14 **GRAM FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR TECHNO-**
 15 **LOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO PREVENT DIS-**
 16 **RUPTION AND ENABLE RECOVERY FROM**
 17 **VARIOUS THREATS.**

18 Section 438(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
 19 629h(a)) is amended—

20 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
 21 (1);

22 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
 23 graph (2) and inserting “and”; and

24 (3) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(3) to prevent disruption and enable recovery
2 from threats such as public health crises, natural
3 disasters, or cyber-attacks, including technology sup-
4 port for remote hearings or legal representation, de-
5 veloping guidance, coordinating with other agencies,
6 or otherwise ensuring back-up approaches are in
7 place to ensure continuity of needed services.”.

8 **SEC. 4. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE ON SHARING BEST**
9 **PRACTICES FOR TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES**
10 **NEEDED FOR COURT PROCEEDINGS FOR**
11 **FOSTER CARE OR ADOPTION TO BE CON-**
12 **DUCTED REMOTELY.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Every 5 years, the Secretary of
14 Health and Human Services, through the Administration
15 for Children and Families, shall issue implementation
16 guidance for sharing information on the best practices
17 for—

18 (1) technological changes needed for court pro-
19 ceedings for foster care or adoption to be conducted
20 remotely in a way that maximizes engagement and
21 protects the privacy of participants; and

22 (2) the manner in which the proceedings should
23 be conducted.

1 (b) INITIAL ISSUANCE.—The Secretary of Health and
2 Human Services shall issue the 1st guidance required by
3 subsection (a) not later than January 1, 2024.

4 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

5 Except as provided in section 2(b), this Act and the
6 amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date
7 that is 6 months after the date of the enactment of this
8 Act.

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