

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6657

To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to encourage the development of specialized foster care programs designed specifically for large sibling groups, sibling groups with a wide age range, and sibling groups with complex needs.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 9, 2022

Mr. BACON (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. MULLIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

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## A BILL

To amend title IV of the Social Security Act to encourage the development of specialized foster care programs designed specifically for large sibling groups, sibling groups with a wide age range, and sibling groups with complex needs.

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 “Protecting Sibling Re-  
5       lationships in Foster Care Act of 2022”.

1 **SEC. 2. COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PROGRAM TO ENCOUR-**  
2 **AGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALIZED**  
3 **FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS DESIGNED SPE-**  
4 **CIFICALLY FOR LARGE SIBLING GROUPS, SIB-**  
5 **LING GROUPS WITH A WIDE AGE RANGE, AND**  
6 **SIBLING GROUPS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS.**

7 Section 435 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
8 629e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

9 “(f) COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PROGRAM TO EN-  
10 COURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALIZED FOSTER  
11 CARE PROGRAMS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR LARGE  
12 SIBLING GROUPS, SIBLING GROUPS WITH A WIDE AGE  
13 RANGE, AND SIBLING GROUPS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall estab-  
15 lish a competitive grant pilot program under which,  
16 during the 5-year period that begins with the date  
17 of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary  
18 shall make not more than 5 grants to eligible enti-  
19 ties who have applied therefor to encourage the de-  
20 velopment of specialized foster care programs de-  
21 signed specifically for groups of 3 or more siblings,  
22 sibling groups with a wide age range, and sibling  
23 groups with, or that include a youth with, complex  
24 needs. For purposes of the preceding sentence, a  
25 youth has complex needs if the youth exhibits chal-  
26 lenging or risky behaviors that could cause themselves

1 or others serious harm, has mental health needs of  
2 such severity that the participation of the youth in  
3 daily life may be impaired either with or without  
4 services being rendered to help, has a disability (as  
5 defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act),  
6 or has an illness that requires continuous monitoring  
7 or is life-threatening, and complex needs include  
8 issues that may arise from siblings in foster care  
9 with a different parent, which could impact the abil-  
10 ity of the siblings to be placed together, or from a  
11 youth with a history of trauma.

12 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this subsection, the  
13 term ‘eligible entity’ means a State child welfare  
14 agency, a State, tribal, or local agency, a faith- or  
15 community-based organization, or a nonprofit orga-  
16 nization that has expertise and demonstrated experi-  
17 ence, as well as State supervision, in administering  
18 a foster care program.

19 “(3) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity that de-  
20 sires to receive a grant under this subsection shall  
21 submit to the Secretary an application that in-  
22 cludes—

23 “(A) a description of how funds received  
24 under the grant will be used to place together  
25 sibling groups described in paragraph (1);

1           “(B) a description of the specialized foster  
2           care program involved, and how the program is  
3           designed for the placement of sibling groups de-  
4           scribed in paragraph (1);

5           “(C) data describing the challenges of plac-  
6           ing, and number of, sibling groups described in  
7           paragraph (1) that are awaiting placements;  
8           and

9           “(D) such other information as the Sec-  
10          retary may reasonably require.

11          “(4) USE OF FUNDS.—A recipient of a grant  
12          under this subsection may use the grant funds only  
13          to develop specialized foster care programs which  
14          are—

15               “(A) designed to identify available place-  
16               ments for, and place together, sibling groups  
17               described in paragraph (1); and

18               “(B) evidence-based, and proven to sub-  
19               stantially increase joint sibling placements.

20          “(5) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—As a condi-  
21          tion of receiving a grant under this subsection, the  
22          grant recipient shall submit to the Secretary a writ-  
23          ten report on the number of children in the special-  
24          ized foster care program involved, the size of the sib-  
25          ling groups served by the program, the methods

1       used to place children with their siblings under the  
2       program, and the outcomes of the placements.

3           “(6) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may pre-  
4       scribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry  
5       out this subsection.

6           “(7) APPROPRIATION.—In addition to any  
7       amounts otherwise made available to carry out this  
8       subpart, out of any money in the Treasury of the  
9       United States not otherwise appropriated, there are  
10      appropriated \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 to  
11      carry out the pilot program under this subsection,  
12      which shall remain available through fiscal year  
13      2026.”.

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