



EXTENDED FOSTER CARE (EFC) HOUSING VOUCHER PROGRAM

Establishing a State Funded Housing Voucher Program in Extended Foster Care

This proposed legislation seeks to create a state-funded housing voucher program modeled after the federal Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program, specifically targeting youth in Extended Foster Care (EFC) who are experiencing homelessness. Due to federal restrictions, young adults currently cannot access both EFC and FYI vouchers simultaneously, a limitation known as 'double dipping.' By creating a state-funded alternative, Washington aims to ensure housing stability for young adults who are still state dependents, reducing homelessness among this vulnerable population.



BILL SPONSOR: SENATOR CLAIRE WILSON



ISSUE & BACKGROUND

KEY ISSUE

Young adults 18-21 in EFC are still state dependents. Yet they are experiencing homelessness due to the lack of housing support. The current state Supervised Independent Living (SIL) payment is not enough to pay for basic needs, and they are currently ineligible to receive federal housing assistance under the FYI program while in EFC. This leaves them without a crucial housing resource.

CONTEXT

The FYI program is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which provides housing vouchers for young adults transitioning from foster care to independent living. Washington administers the EFC program with federal (Title IV-E) or state (SB 5908) dollars. The current state SIL Payment for the EFC program is \$861, which doesn't cover median rent and/or the cost of basic needs in Washington. Currently, the Federal FYI program is only available to those outside of the Federal EFC program.

IMPACT

Young adults who are still state dependents should not be experiencing homelessness. It is the state's responsibility to support these young people. This would close the support gap and ensure our young people in EFC have sustainable housing.

DATA

According to data from the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), of the 1,094 young adults in EFC in 2024, 200 (18.3%) had a flag for being homeless or unstably housed for at least one month when they were also in EFC.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

- **Legislation/Regulatory Action:** This proposal advocates for the creation of a Washington State-funded housing voucher program modeled after the Federal FYI program but accessible to youth in EFC. A state-funded solution will address the housing resource gap and mitigate homelessness among EFC youth.
- **Resolution:** With a state-level voucher program, Washington can offer crucial housing stability, enhancing the support provided to EFC participants while enabling them to engage in other essential services.
- **Legislative Pathway:** The new program will require the introduction of a bill and support from advocacy groups and legislative champions.



BENEFITS & OUTCOMES

Positive Outcomes:

- Prevention of homelessness for youth in EFC
- Smooth transition into adulthood
- Optimized use of state and federal resources for long-term youth success

Who Benefits:

- Youth and young adults in the EFC program
- Service providers, social workers, and dependency lawyers with additional resources

Social, Economic, or Public Health Benefits:

- Reduced homelessness among foster youth aging out of care
- Enhanced mental health, economic mobility, and social stability for former foster youth
- Long-term state savings by reducing reliance on emergency housing services

Measurable Results:

- Fewer EFC youth experiencing homelessness
- Increased stability and positive outcomes as reported by EFC participants
- Cost savings due to decreased reliance on emergency intervention services

TAKE ACTION

Immediate action is essential to provide housing stability for EFC youth, safeguarding them from homelessness and promoting long-term success.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Charles Smith, Mockingbird's Director of Public Policy & Advocacy:

charles.smith@mockingbirdsociety.org

Susie Zhang, Mockingbird's Public Policy & Advocacy Manager:

susie@mockingbirdsociety.org

Our policy work is done in partnership with:



Transforming foster care & Ending youth homelessness

[Learn more about our work and connect with us!](#)