



Leadership, voice and vision for child welfare in New York State

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

A.2525-C Hevesi

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to expanding the age range for eligibility for the rent subsidy payable to a foster child living independently.

The Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) strongly supports A.2525-C sponsored by Assembly Member Hevesi which would expand the upper age limit for the child welfare housing subsidy up to age 24.

The goal of the child welfare housing subsidy program is to stabilize housing for youth as they transition to independent life. With the passage of the 2023-24 NYS Budget, families with open child protective services investigations, families receiving prevention services, families where children are reunifying from foster care, and youth ages 18 through 21 are eligible to receive up to \$725 per month for up to three years. Because of the upper age limit of 21, individuals “aging out” of foster care after the age of 18, are unable to receive the subsidy for the full program period, or possibly at all. This bill will ensure that youth “aging out” of foster care up to age 21 are able to avail themselves of the subsidy when they are transitioning to independent living – exactly when they need it most.

Housing is critical to the economic security of New Yorkers. Homelessness and housing instability is at a crisis point in New York State, straining all of New York’s housing systems. Additionally, much of the federal pandemic economic supports, including emergency payments and rental protections, ended in 2021. The child welfare housing subsidy is a vital support to youth exiting foster care, who often face housing instability.

For transition-age youth living independently, this legislation is a much-needed expansion of a critical preventive service. By passing this piece of legislation, New York has the opportunity to strengthen its housing subsidy program so that more youth and families may be supported.

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