

## BILL SUMMARY

### The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act, S. 2646 Reauthorizes and Strengthens the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA)

Senator Leahy (D-VT) and Senator Collins (R-ME) introduced the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act to reauthorize the [Runaway and Homeless Youth Act \(RHYA\) \(42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.\)](#), which expired September 30, 2013. The National Network for Youth (NN4Y) has been leading this reauthorization with our partners and built consensus on the priorities by convening the [RHYA 2013-2014 Reauthorization Working Group](#). A summary of the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act is below.

#### GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES TO SERVE HOMELESS YOUTH

*Basic Center Program (BCP) provides temporary housing with crisis intervention services to minors including counseling, family reunification and aftercare.*

- The length of stay has been increased from 21 to 30 days in length.
- Services must be inclusive of the youth's family, including other individuals identified by the youth as family, and trauma-informed.
- Programs must have a plan for working with outreach programs to attract runaway or homeless youth who are victims of human trafficking and must record demographics and characteristics of youth served, including the number of runaway or homeless youth who are victims of human trafficking.
- Programs must assist youth with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Priority is no longer given to eligible applicants who request grants less than \$200,000.

*Transitional Living Program (TLP) provides longer-term housing with supportive services for homeless 16 to 21 year olds, including education, job preparation and health care—includes funding for Maternity Group Homes.*

- Services must include aftercare, job training, mental and physical health care, suicide prevention, and counseling services that includes, when appropriate, the family of the youth, including those individuals who the youth identifies as family.
- Programs must have a referral plan for mental health care, including referrals to programs providing services to victims of human trafficking.
- Programs must include a statistical summary in the annual report describing the number, characteristics and demographics of the youth who participated in the project, including prevalence of human trafficking.

*Street Outreach Program (SOP)—(Sexual Abuse Prevention Program) provides outreach to runaway, homeless and human trafficked youth to build relationships and refer youth to vital services at street locations and drop-in centers.*

- These services are provided to runaway and homeless youth, and street youth who have been subject to or at risk of being subject to sexual abuse (prostitution will be omitted), violence, sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

#### NATIONAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

##### *Training and Technical Assistance*

Every RHYA grantee receives training and technical assistance from the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center (RHYTTAC). The training includes on-site and web-based techniques, such as on-demand and online learning.

### ***National Communications Systems***

To assist runaway and homeless youth across the United States, a national call center takes calls from youth and families in crisis. This call center makes connections between runaway and homeless youth and their families and/or service providers.

### ***Coordination***

The Secretary of HHS shall coordinate the activities of the Department of Health and Human Services with the activities of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice.

## **RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION**

### ***The National Study of the Prevalence, Needs and Characteristics of Homeless Youth***

A national study to collect data on the runaway and homeless youth population in the United States in order to scale-to-need the prevention and crisis intervention services homeless youth need to thrive. Included in the 2008 reauthorization of RHYA, the study has yet to be conducted due to lack of appropriated funds.

- Data collected must include information about runaway and homeless youth who have been victims of human trafficking and include barriers to mental health services, education and job training.

### ***Rural Demonstration Grants***

Provides grants to service providers for youth in rural areas with a population of less than 20,000. Only two grants can be awarded per state, and previous grantees are given priority.

### ***Research, Evaluation, Demonstration and Service Projects***

States, localities and private entities can be awarded grants to carry out projects to increase the knowledge about and improve services for the runaway and homeless youth population.

- Projects must examine the intersection between the runaway and homeless youth populations and victims of human trafficking.
- Priority will be given to projects that serve diverse populations of runaway and homeless youth, including victims of human trafficking.

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### ***Human Trafficking Definition***

“Human Trafficking” or “Trafficking in Persons” has been defined in reference to the definition in Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102) which includes both labor and sex trafficking and the language throughout the bill has been updated.

### ***Nondiscrimination***

A nondiscrimination clause has been added that will apply to all programs that receive RHYA funding in order to ensure that all youth are treated fairly.

### ***Performance Standards***

Requires performance standards to be developed with input from organizations receiving grants and experts in the field. These performance standards will be integrated into the grantmaking, monitoring and evaluation of runaway and homeless youth programs.

### ***Funding***

The overall funding has been maintained at \$140 million per fiscal year for general programs, \$25 million per year for the sexual abuse prevention program (street outreach) and \$2 million per fiscal year for a national study.