

# ***ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES***

## ***House Committee Report***

***Excerpts from the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education,  
and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2008***

***(Report No. 110-231)***

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### **TITLE II--DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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#### **ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

##### **PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

The Committee recommends \$2,949,713,000 for the child support enforcement and family support programs, and \$1,000,000,000 in advance funding for the first quarter of fiscal year 2009 to ensure timely payments for the child support enforcement program. This amount is the same as the budget request. The Committee recommends estimated funding of \$38,000,000 for payments to territories, the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The Committee notes that the authorized funding level for the repatriation program is set at \$1,000,000 under section 1113(d) of the Social Security Act even though approximately \$1,300,000 is needed to support the current repatriation program. The Committee urges the authorizing committee of jurisdiction to adjust the ceiling to accommodate the current nonemergency needs of the program as well as to permit rapid response to emergency repatriation of U.S. citizens due to war, threat of war, invasion, natural disaster, or similar crises.

##### **LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE**

The Committee recommends \$2,662,000,000 for the low income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP). This amount is \$500,830,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$880,000,000 more than the budget request. The Committee recommends \$1,980,000,000 for the State formula grants, which is \$480,000,000 more than the budget request and the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level. The Committee recommends \$682,000,000 for the contingent emergency reserve. This is \$500,830,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$400,000,000 more than the budget request.

LIHEAP provides assistance to low-income households to help pay the costs of home energy. This program serves the most vulnerable in the country—94 percent of households receiving LIHEAP grants have at least one family member who is elderly, disabled, a child under 18, or

have a single adult living with one or more children. More than three quarters of such households reported an annual income at or below \$20,000. Currently only 16 percent of eligible households based on Federal guidelines receive LIHEAP assistance. The amount recommended by the Committee could provide energy assistance to 1,252,075 more families than in fiscal year 2007.

### **REFUGEE AND ENTRANT ASSISTANCE**

The Committee recommends \$650,630,000 for refugee assistance programs. This is \$62,783,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$5,000,000 less than the budget request.

In addition, the Committee recommends that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) again be granted authority to carry over unexpended funds from fiscal year 2008 to reimburse the costs of services provided through September 30, 2010, for all programs within the jurisdiction of ORR.

#### *Transitional and medical services*

The Committee recommends \$294,021,000 for transitional and medical services. This is \$28,475,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the same as the budget request. The transitional and medical services program provides funding for the State-administered cash and medical assistance program that assists refugees who are not categorically eligible for TANF or Medicaid, the unaccompanied minors program that reimburses States for the cost of foster care, and the voluntary agency grant program in which participating national refugee resettlement agencies provide resettlement assistance with a combination of Federal and matched funds.

#### *Victims of trafficking*

The Committee recommends up to \$9,814,000 for the victims of trafficking program. This is \$9,000 less than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$5,002,000 less than the budget request. The Committee strongly supports the continued administration of a national network for identification, tracking, and certification of trafficking victims. The Committee's recommendation does not include funds for an unauthorized grant program for domestic victims of trafficking. Many of the domestic victims are eligible for Federal benefits in addition to all trafficking benefits, except those reserved for refugees.

The Committee supports efforts to ensure that child trafficking victims do not remain trapped in life-threatening situations out of fear of being interrogated by law enforcement authorities. The Committee requests the Department to expedite letters of eligibility so that minor victims may be connected to benefits without delay. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the low number of child trafficking victims being identified and recommends that the Department expand its practices on the identification of human trafficking victims.

#### *Social services*

The Committee recommends \$154,005,000 for social services. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$4,395,000 more than the budget request. Funds are distributed by formula as well as through the discretionary grant-making process for special projects.

Within the funds provided, the Committee has included \$19,000,000 for support to communities with large concentrations of Cuban and Haitian entrants of varying ages whose cultural differences make assimilation especially difficult, justifying a more intense level and longer duration of Federal assistance.

The Committee continues to request that the Administration for Children and Families adequately fund refugee school impact grants.

#### *Preventive health*

The Committee recommends \$4,748,000 for preventive health services. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$48,000 more than the budget request. These funds are awarded to States to ensure adequate health assessment activities for refugees.

#### *Targeted assistance*

The Committee recommends \$48,590,000 for the targeted assistance program. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$486,000 more than the budget request. These grants provide assistance to areas with high concentrations of refugees.

#### *Unaccompanied minors*

The Committee recommends \$129,635,000 for the unaccompanied minors program. This is \$34,317,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$5,027,000 below the budget request.

The Committee recognizes the complexity of detention for unaccompanied children (UAC) awaiting removal proceedings and urges the Administration for Children and Families to ensure that the safety and humane treatment of these children are key priorities of the agencies that detain them. The Committee has included additional funds for the care and placement of an increasing number of UAC through foster care, shelter care, staff secure or secure detention centers, and for additional field staff in areas of high apprehensions. The Committee supports the Department's efforts to prioritize care for UACs in child-centered, age-appropriate, small group and foster-care settings. The Committee requests the Department to brief the Committee on the allegations of abuse by shelter staff and what steps the Department is taking to prevent such abuse in the future. The Committee does not recommend that funds be included for expanded background checks before placement of UAC. Most of the funds requested for this activity would pay for additional shelter costs as new background checks would lengthen the average shelter stay of a UAC by one to three weeks. The Committee believes this additional cost is excessive because ORR currently performs, and the Committee expects it to continue to perform, a rigorous background check on each adult to whom a child is released and conducts a home assessment as circumstances warrant.

The Committee supports the Department's efforts to provide medical service that meet quality standards for the children under its care. The Committee directs the Department to provide the Committee a report on expenses incurred in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and what it expects to incur in fiscal year 2009 delivering routine, emergent, and emergency mental and physical medical services to UAC.

The Committee recognizes the legal representation crisis and need for guardians for UAC and is pleased with the progress ORR has made in implementing pro bono pilot programs. The Committee's recommendation includes funds to expand the pilot program as a national pro bono legal services program to ensure representation of all UAC in adversarial immigration removal proceedings and affirmative asylum proceedings. The Committee expects these funds to be matched with non-Federal funds through a public-private partnership. The Committee intends that pro bono attorneys participating in this program shall be trained by experts in immigration law and provided with mentors to ensure effective representation. Additionally, in light of the time attorneys will be expected to spend with their UAC clients, the Committee intends these funds to be used to train the attorneys to detect abuse, mistreatment, labor exploitation, and trafficking. Finally, the Committee intends these funds to be used to train the attorneys in methods to ensure the appearance of UAC at immigration court hearings. In fiscal year 2006 approximately 93 percent of children released from custody appeared at their hearings when represented by counsel. Furthermore, according to the U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom, asylum-seekers represented by counsel are more than eight times as likely to be granted asylum as those unrepresented by counsel.

#### *Victims of torture*

The Committee recommends \$9,817,000 to provide a comprehensive program of support for domestic centers and programs for victims of torture. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$100,000 more than the budget request.

### **PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR THE CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT**

The Committee recommends \$2,137,081,000 for the discretionary portion of the child care and development block grant program, which provides child care services for low-income families. The Committee recommendation provides an \$75,000,000 increase over the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The recommendation is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term.

The discretionary portion of this block grant has remained essentially frozen since fiscal year 2002, resulting in a severe drop in the number of children served. The Committee's recommendation takes a step toward reversing this trend.

The Committee believes that child care is an important investment for two reasons. First, child care assistance is key if low-income parents are to be able to work and become self-sufficient. Single mothers who receive child care assistance are 40 percent more likely to remain employed

after two years than those who do not receive assistance in paying for child care. Second, studies have shown that high-quality child care helps ensure that children enter school ready to succeed. By second grade, children who had received high-quality care demonstrated greater mathematical ability, greater thinking and attention skills, and fewer behavioral problems than the children who had received lower-quality care.

### **SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

The Committee recommends \$1,700,000,000 for the social services block grant (SSBG). This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 level. The Committee rejects the Administration's proposal to cut SSBG by \$500,000,000. The Committee continues to provide this flexible source of funding to help local communities provide a variety of social services to needy individuals and their families, including services that help prevent dependency, inappropriate institutional care, and neglect and abuse of children and adults.

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES PROGRAMS**

The Committee recommends a program level total of \$9,127,110,000 for children and families services programs. This is \$178,140,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$877,021,000 more than the budget request. Within the total provided, \$10,500,000 is provided through the evaluation set-aside. This account finances a number of programs aimed at enhancing the well-being of the nation's children and families, particularly those who are disadvantaged or troubled.

#### *Head Start*

The Committee recommends \$6,963,571,000 for the Head Start program, which is \$75,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$175,000,000 more than the budget request. Of this total, the Committee recommends advancing \$1,388,800,000 of this account for fiscal year 2008.

The Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, granted Head Start its first increase since fiscal year 2002. After five years of level funding, centers across the country were forced to cut hours, transportation, and educational instruction, which have threatened the quality of the programs. In this recommendation, the Committee takes another step to restore a portion of those deep cuts in real terms and permit communities to enhance the quality of comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and their families. The Committee continues its strong support for this program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services. The Committee's \$75,000,000 increase over fiscal year 2007 is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term.

The Committee recognizes that a recent study showed that children who participated in early Head Start had a higher cognitive development score, demonstrated a higher level of social-

emotional development, a higher vocabulary, and higher rates of immunization than children not enrolled in early Head Start. The Committee further recognizes that only 2 percent of children eligible for early Head Start are currently served by this program. Therefore, the Committee urges the Office of Head Start to consider its value to children, families, and our communities and increase the level of funding available for grants for early Head Start programs.

#### *Consolidated runaway and homeless youth programs*

The Committee recommends \$97,837,000 for runaway and homeless youth activities (RHYA). This is an increase of \$10,000,000 over the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. Funds for this program are distributed between the basic center program and the transitional living program under a statutory formula.

The runaway and homeless youth programs provide grants to local public and private organizations to establish and operate runaway and homeless youth shelters to address the crisis needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. Grants are used to develop or strengthen community-based shelters, which are outside the law enforcement, juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health systems.

The Committee supports the Department's efforts to place greater emphasis on runaway prevention activities under the RHYA program. The Committee encourages the Secretary to explore additional methods to promote and expand these prevention efforts.

The Committee's recommendation includes a \$10,000,000 increase as part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term. The increase will fund approximately 70 new shelters that will provide youth essential life-skills, connect youth to education, workforce and other supports, and expand services to pregnant/parenting youth.

#### *Prevention grants to reduce abuse of runaway youth*

The Committee recommends \$15,027,000 for prevention grants to reduce abuse of runaway youth. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. This program provides grants to support street-based outreach and education to runaway, homeless, and street youth who have been sexually abused or who are at-risk of sexual abuse. The street outreach program ensures rapid engagement with young people in an effort to prevent the most terrible situations that take place when they are subjected to life on the streets, including physical and sexual abuse, assault, commercial sexual exploitation, disease, long-term homelessness, and even death.

#### *Child abuse State grants and discretionary activities*

For child abuse State grants and discretionary activities, the Committee recommends \$63,840,000. This is \$11,053,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$695,000

more than the budget request. Within this total, the recommendation includes \$27,007,000 for State grants and \$36,833,000 for child abuse discretionary activities.

The Committee’s recommendation includes the \$10,000,000 increase as part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term. The Committee intends the increased funding to be dedicated to support State use of research- and evidence-based home visitation models that use professionals, nurses, paraprofessionals, and trained volunteers from the community to improve parenting and family health. The Committee has funded the Administration’s request for this activity after reviewing the research supporting the value of a range of early childhood home visitation models and their positive affect on prenatal health, preventing child maltreatment, and improvement in other important outcomes for these young families

The Committee includes the following projects in the following amounts:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Committee recommendation</b>
Children Uniting Nations, Los Angeles, CA for a foster child mentoring program in Los Angeles	\$100,000
Crisis Nursery of the Ozarks, Springfield, MO for a child abuse prevention program	245,000
Jefferson County, Golden, CO for child abuse prevention and treatment programs	100,000
New York Center for Children, New York, NY for comprehensive support and services to abused children and their families	150,000
Shelter for Abused Women, Winchester, VA to enhance community efforts to address domestic violence	100,000

*Community-based child abuse prevention*

The Committee recommends \$42,430,000 for community-based child abuse prevention. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. Funds are provided to State agencies and are used to develop, operate, expand, and enhance community-based efforts to strengthen and support families in an effort to prevent child abuse and neglect.

*Abandoned infants assistance*

The Committee recommends \$11,835,000 for the abandoned infants assistance program. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The purpose of this program is to provide financial support to public and private community and faith-based entities to develop, implement, and operate demonstration projects that will prevent the

abandonment of infants and young children exposed to HIV/AIDS and drugs; identify and address their needs; assist such children to reside with their natural families or in foster care; recruit, train, and retain foster parents as well as health and social services personnel; provide respite care for families and foster families; and prevent the abandonment of infants and young children.

#### *Child welfare services and training*

The Committee recommends \$286,754,000 for child welfare services. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. This program provides grants to States to assist public welfare agencies to improve child welfare services. State services include preventive intervention in order for children to stay in their homes, alternative placement like foster care or adoption if it is not possible for children to remain at home, and reunification programs so that, if appropriate, children can return home.

The Committee recommends \$7,335,000 for child welfare training. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The Committee recognizes the need for trained, skilled, and qualified child welfare service workers. This program provides grants to institutions of higher education to develop and improve education and training programs and resources for child welfare service providers as well as students seeking degrees in social work.

#### *Adoption opportunities*

The Committee recommends \$26,848,000 for adoption opportunities. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. This program provides funding specifically targeted to improving the adoption of children, particularly those with special needs, and for providing innovative services that support families involved in adoption.

#### *Adoption incentives*

The Committee recommends \$9,500,000 for the adoption incentives program. This is \$4,500,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$4,000,000 less than the budget request. This program targets incentives specifically for older children. Funds are awarded to States using three baselines: one for the total number of children adopted, one for children with special needs under the age of nine, and one for children aged nine and older. The goal of this program is to increase the number of adoptions nationwide.

#### *Adoption awareness*

The Committee recommends \$14,674,000 for the adoption awareness program. This is a \$2,000,000 increase above the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The Committee's recommended increase is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America. The increase for adoption awareness will expand training activities for adoption agency staff, resulting in enhanced information to and counseling of young pregnant women about adoption as one of their options, as well as expanded referrals to adoption agencies. Funds will also be used to develop best practice guidelines in adoption counseling.



*Compassion capital fund*

The Committee recommends \$64,350,000 for the compassion capital fund. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$10,650,000 less than the budget request. This program provides grants to intermediary organizations that in turn provide training and technical assistance to faith-and-community-based organizations. The program also provides capacity-building grants directly to the latter organizations, which include organizations that foster supportive relationships with youth.

*Social services and income maintenance research*

The Committee recommends \$8,635,000 for social services and income maintenance research, \$6,000,000 of which is through the evaluation set-aside. This is the same as the President’s request. These funds support research, demonstration, evaluation, and dissemination activities. Recent topics funded through this program include welfare-to-work strategies and programs to strengthen family relationships and promote healthy marriages.

In 2006, Congress reauthorized the temporary assistance for needy families program, imposing new administrative mandates on States with regard to tracking and verifying work participation rates. As a result, each State must now design and implement new systems and procedures for tracking work-eligible participants or risk financial penalties. ACF is currently working collaboratively with States to pilot-test the most cost-efficient ways to meet new monitoring and verification requirements. The Committee encourages ACF to continue to work with the States to ensure that needy families receive assistance in a timely manner. Similarly, new administrative requirements contained in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 call upon States to broaden their child support collection efforts, including seeking medical insurance coverage for children from non-custodial parents, and mandatory review and adjustment of support orders. ACF is currently working to increase the exchange of critical case information among State child support agencies, their courts, and the Federal government. The Committee encourages ACF to continue to augment the ability of States to collect and distribute child support payments.

The Committee includes the following projects in the following amounts:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Committee recommendation</b>
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Virginia, MN for the Family-to-Family community based mentoring program to assist low-income families	\$250,000
Augusta Levy Learning Center, Wheeling, WV for services to children with Autism	75,000
Beth EI House, Alexandria, VA for social services and transitional housing for formerly homeless women and their children	75,000
Children’s Home Society of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD for services	250,000

<b>Project</b>	<b>Committee recommendation</b>
related to domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect	
Christian Outreach of Lutherans, Waukegan, IL for Latino leadership development in underserved areas	125,000
City of Detroit, MI for an Individual Development Account initiative	350,000
City of Fort Worth, TX for programming at neighborhood-based early childhood resource centers	200,000
City of San Jose, CA for its Services for New Americans program, including assistance with job seeking skills, citizenship, family safety and resettlement	200,000
Cliff Hagan Boys and Girls Club - Mike Horn Unit, Owensboro, KY for purchase of equipment	175,000
Communities In Schools, Bell-Coryell Counties, Inc., Killeen, TX for youth counseling services	260,000
Covenant House Florida, Ft. Lauderdale, FL for a program for pregnant and parenting teens and young adults	200,000
Eisner Pediatric and Family Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA for the Parent-Child Home Program	125,000
Every Citizen Has Opportunities, Inc., Leesburg, VA for services to disabled individuals	100,000
Family Center of Washington County, Montpelier, VT for childcare and related services	200,000
First 5 Alameda County, San Leandro, CA for development and support of postsecondary early childhood education and training programs, which may include student scholarships	175,000
Friendship Circle of the South Bay, Redondo Beach, CA for services for children with developmental disabilities	275,000
Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc., New Britain, CT for the Pathways/Senderos Center for education and outreach	125,000
Hamilton-Madison House, New York, NY for services and equipment for a social services program	100,000
Healthy Learners Dillon, Columbia, SC for social services for economically disadvantaged children	200,000
Helping Children Worldwide, Herndon, VA to assist students and families	250,000

<b>Project</b>	<b>Committee recommendation</b>
Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department, Minneapolis, MN for the Family Healing and Restoration Network Project	285,000
Hillside Family of Agencies, Rochester, NY for the Hillside Children's Center for adoption services	100,000
Hope Village for Children, Meridian, MS for a program to assist foster children	215,000
Horizons for Homeless Children, Boston, MA for Playspace Programs for homeless children	50,000
Kingsborough Community College, Brooklyn, NY for the New American's Center	100,000
L.I.F.T. Women's Resource Center, Detroit, MI for services to improve self-sufficiency and life skills of women transitioning from substance abuse, domestic violence, or homelessness	100,000
Lawrence County Social Services, New Castle, PA for early childhood, parental training, and life skills programs	125,000
Lutheran Social Services, Duluth, MN for services to runaway, homeless, and other at-risk youth and their families	350,000
Marcus Institute, Atlanta, GA for services for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities and severe and challenging behaviors	400,000
Mary's Family, Orlean, VA to develop a respite program for Winchester-area special needs families	100,000
Mecklenburg County, Charlotte, NC, for a program to combat domestic violence	200,000
Missouri Bootheel Regional Consortium, Portageville, MO for the Fatherhood First program	250,000
Monterey County Probation Department, Salinas, CA for the Silver Star gang prevention and intervention program	350,000
Nashua Adult Learning Center, Nashua, NH for a Family Resource Center	100,000
National Energy Assistance Directors' Association, Washington, DC for research and information dissemination related to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program	200,000
Network for Instructional TV, Inc., Reston, VA for a training program for child care providers	50,000

<b>Project</b>	<b>Committee recommendation</b>
Nurses for Newborns Foundation, St. Louis, MO for nurse home visiting program	300,000
Organization of the NorthEast, Chicago, IL for development of a local homeless services continuum	50,000
Pediatric Interim Care Center, Kent, WA for the Drug-Exposed Infants Outreach and Education program	150,000
Public Health Department, Solano County, Fairfield, CA for a program to support pregnant women and new mothers	100,000
Sephardic Bikur Holim of Monmouth County, Deal, NJ for social services programs	100,000
Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network, San Jose, CA for assistance to immigrants seeking citizenship	100,000
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL for the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders	150,000
Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX for coordination of family and child services	150,000
Susan Wesley Family Learning Center, East Prairie, MO for programs to assist at-risk youth and their families	100,000
TLC for Children and Families, Inc., Olathe, KS for a transitional living program for at-risk and homeless youth	200,000
United Way Southeastern Michigan, Detroit, MI for the Communities of Early Learning initiative	200,000
University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, MO for the treatment of autism spectrum disorders	250,000
Visitation Home, Inc., Yardville, NJ for programs to assist developmentally disabled residents	100,000

*Developmental disabilities*

For programs authorized by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and the Help America Vote Act, the Committee recommends \$175,836,000. This is \$5,001,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 level and \$5,000,000 more than the budget request.

The account total includes \$76,771,000 for allotments to States to fund State councils, which is \$5,000,000 more than the budget request and the fiscal year 2007 funding level. These councils develop, improve, and expand the system of services and supports for people with developmental

disabilities. Through their activities, Councils on Developmental Disabilities provide for the inclusion and integration of individuals with developmental disabilities in the economic, political, social, cultural, religious and educational mainstream of our nation.

Within the total, \$38,718,000 will be available to States for operating a protection and advocacy system to protect the legal and human rights of the developmentally disabled. This amount is the same as the budget request and the fiscal year 2007 funding level.

The Committee recommends \$15,720,000 for voting access for individuals with disabilities programs. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. Within the funds provided, \$10,890,000 is for payments to States to promote access for voters with disabilities and \$4,830,000 is for State protection and advocacy systems. These programs are intended to make polling places accessible and provide equal access and participation for individuals with disabilities. The protection and advocacy program will ensure that individuals can fully participate in the electoral process, including registering to vote, accessing polling places, and casting a vote.

The Committee recommends \$11,414,000 for developmental disabilities projects of national significance. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request.

The Committee recommends \$33,213,000 for the university centers for excellence in developmental disabilities. This is \$1,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 level and the same as the budget request. This funding provides discretionary grants to public or not-for-profit entities associated with universities. The grants provide basic operational and administrative core support for these agencies. In addition, these funds support interdisciplinary training, community services, research and technical assistance, and information dissemination.

#### *Native American programs*

The Committee recommends \$47,332,000 for Native American programs. This is \$3,000,000 more than the budget request and the fiscal year 2007 funding level. The Native American programs assist tribal and village governments, Native American institutions and organizations to support and develop stable, diversified local economies. In promoting social and economic self-sufficiency, this program provides financial assistance through direct grants for individual projects, training and technical assistance, and research and demonstration programs.

The Committee intends that the \$3,000,000 increase be available to fund the activities authorized under section 803C(b)(7)(A)-(C) of the Native American Programs Act (as added by the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006).

#### *Community services*

The Committee recommends \$730,959,000 for community services activities. This is \$706,507,000 more than the budget request and \$36,385,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level.

### *Community services block grants*

For the community services block grants, the Committee recommends \$660,425,000. This is \$30,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level. No funds were requested for this program. This program provides grants to over 1,000 counties, territories, and Indian tribes for services such as employment, housing, nutrition, energy, emergency services, child care, job training and job placement, parenting education, adult literacy classes, domestic violence prevention, emergency food assistance, and health needs of low-income people.

The Committee's recommended 4.8 percent increase is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term. Increased services will help struggling, low-income families raise their children.

### *Community economic development*

The Committee recommends \$32,700,000 for community economic development. This is \$5,678,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level. No funds were requested for this program. This program provides assistance to private, locally initiated community development corporations (CDCs) that sponsor enterprises providing employment, training, and business development opportunities for low-income residents in poor communities.

The Committee's recommendation reflects its commitment to helping CDCs continue their good work in transforming the low income communities in which they serve. CDCs help capitalize nearly 60,000 small businesses a year and provide approximately \$2,000,000,000 in loan assistance to entrepreneurs and residents in low income communities a year. The increase over fiscal year 2007 will fund approximately 9 new grants, totaling 45.

### *Job opportunities for low-income individuals*

The Committee recommends \$5,382,000, the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level, for job opportunities for low-income individuals (JOLI). No funds were requested for this program. This program provides competitive grants to non-profit organizations to create new employment and business opportunities for TANF recipients and other low-income individuals.

### *Individual development accounts*

The Committee recommends \$24,452,000 for individual development accounts. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. Individual development accounts are dedicated savings accounts that can be used by families with limited means for purchasing a first home, paying for postsecondary education or capitalizing a business. The intent of the program is to encourage participants to develop and reinforce strong habits for saving money. Section 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible to apply for the funds and applicants must match Federal funds with non-Federal funds.

### *Rural community facilities*

The Committee recommends \$8,000,000 for the rural community facilities program. This amount is \$707,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level. No funds were requested for this program. The Committee includes these funds to be used solely for the purpose of improving water and wastewater facilities in poor, rural communities. As in the past, these funds should be allocated to regional rural community assistance programs.

#### *Violent crime reduction programs*

The Committee recommends \$134,731,000 for family violence prevention and services and battered women's shelters. This is \$10,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. This program is designed to assist States and Indian Tribes in efforts to prevent family violence and to provide immediate shelter and related assistance for victims of family violence and their dependents.

The Committee also includes \$2,970,000 to fund a domestic violence hotline. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request.

The Committee's recommended 8 percent increase is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term. Increased funding will permit States to expand domestic violence prevention services to more at-risk women.

#### *Mentoring children of prisoners*

The Committee recommends \$49,493,000 for the mentoring children of prisoners program. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$507,000 less than the budget request. This program supports competitively awarded grants to States and local governments, Indian tribes and consortia, and faith- and community-based organizations to mentor children of prisoners and those recently released from prison.

#### *Independent living training vouchers*

The Committee recommends \$46,157,000 for independent living training vouchers. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. These funds support vouchers for college tuition or vocational training for individuals who age out of the foster care system so they can be better prepared to live independently.

#### *Abstinence education*

The Committee recommends a program level total of \$141,164,000 for the community-based abstinence education program, which is the same as the budget request and \$27,764,000 above the fiscal year 2007 level. As requested, \$4,500,000 is provided within the total through the evaluation set-aside. The program provides support to public and private entities for implementation of community-based abstinence education programs for adolescents aged 12 through 18 (as defined in Section 510(b)(2) of the Social Security Act). The entire focus of these

programs is to educate young people and create an environment within communities that supports teen decisions to postpone sexual activity until marriage. There is no funding match requirement for these grants. The Committee intends that up to 5 percent of these funds be used to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to grantees. Within the total, up to \$10,000,000 may be used to carry out a national Abstinence Education Campaign.

The Committee's recommended increase is part of its initiative to help reduce the number of abortions in America by alleviating the economic pressures and other real life conditions that can sometimes cause women to decide not to carry their pregnancies to term. The increase will provide support for an additional 63 grants over fiscal year 2007. The \$27,764,000 increase for the community-based abstinence education program is identical to that recommended for the family planning program.

The Committee urges the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to utilize the set-aside to ensure that programs around the country are using appropriate and approved curricula that are evidence-based and comply with the appropriate Federal legislation. To that end, the Committee requests ACF to issue a report to the Committees on Appropriation of the House and Senate no later than 90 days after enactment of this Act on the use of the 5 percent set-aside and the intended use of the fiscal year 2008 funds. The Committee also requests ACF to include in this report the funds from the national abstinence education campaign that are being used for training and technical assistance. The Committee reinforces the guidance from its report accompanying the fiscal year 2005 appropriation with respect to the abstinence messages given by the public health entities that are grantees in the community-based abstinence education program and to the conduct of evaluation activities for the program.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall require each applicant for financial assistance under the abstinence education program funded under this heading to certify that all materials proposed in the application and funded during the project period of the grant are medically accurate; and a panel of medical experts shall review such grant applications and assess whether the materials proposed are medically accurate.

#### *Faith-based center*

The Committee recommends \$1,386,000 for the faith-based center. This amount is the same as the budget request and the fiscal year 2007 funding level. The center will support implementation of faith-based and community initiatives in accordance with the President's executive order.

#### *Program direction*

The Committee recommends \$187,776,000 for program direction expenses for ACF. This is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and \$9,449,000 less than the budget request.

#### *Promoting safe and stable families*



The Committee recommends \$345,000,000 in mandatory funds for the promoting safe and stable families program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The Committee recommends \$89,100,000 in discretionary funds for this program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request.

*Payments to States for foster care and assistance*

The Committee recommends \$5,082,000,000 for payments to States for foster care and adoption assistance. This is \$170,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the same as the budget request. The Committee also includes an advance appropriation of \$1,776,000,000 for the first quarter of fiscal year 2009 to ensure timely completion of first quarter grant awards.

Within the total appropriation, including the advance appropriation from the prior year, the Committee recommends \$4,593,000,000 for the foster care program to provide maintenance payments to States on behalf of children who must live outside their homes. This amount is the same as the budget request and \$118,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level.

Within the total appropriation, the Committee recommends \$2,159,000,000 for adoption assistance. This is \$132,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the same as the budget request. This program provides training for parents and State administrative staff as well as payments on behalf of categorically eligible children considered difficult to adopt. This annually appropriated entitlement is designed to provide alternatives to long, inappropriate stays in foster care by developing permanent placements with families.

Within the total appropriation for this account, the Committee recommends \$140,000,000 for the independent living program. This amount is the same as the fiscal year 2007 funding level and the budget request. The program is designed to assist foster children age 16 or older to make successful transitions to independence. Funds assist children to earn high school diplomas, receive vocational training, and obtain training in daily living skills. Funds are awarded to States on the basis of the number of children on behalf of whom Federal foster care payments are received.

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**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

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Sec. 204. The Committee includes a provision limiting the compensation of an individual working in Head Start to the Federal Executive Level II salary.