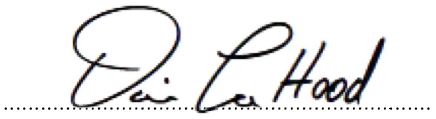

(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend section 477 of the Social Security Act to improve coordination with Federal housing assistance programs for youth who have experienced foster care.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. LAHOOD introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend section 477 of the Social Security Act to improve coordination with Federal housing assistance programs for youth who have experienced foster care.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Foster Youth Housing Opportunity Act''.

SEC. 2. IMPROVING ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR FOSTER YOUTH.

Section 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking ''and preventive'' and inserting ''preventive''; and

(B) by inserting '', and access to housing for youth age 18 or older'' before the semicolon;

(2) in subsection (a)(4), by inserting ''current and'' before ''former'';

(3) in subsection (b)(2)(D), by inserting '', including by collaborating with public housing agencies that administer Federal housing programs serving foster youth under section 8(x)(2)(B) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 and receive funding to partner with public child welfare agencies to serve youth who have experienced foster care'' before the period;

(4) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking ''not more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment under subsection (c) for a fiscal year'' and inserting ''an average of not more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment under subsection (c) for the 5 fis-

cal years covered by the application submitted by the State pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection'';

(5) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following:

''(6) HOUSING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A State may use amounts from its allotment under subsection (c) to provide supportive services to assist eligible youth who experienced foster care to obtain or retain suitable housing.

''(B) DEFINITIONS.—

''(i) ELIGIBLE YOUTH.—In this subsection, the term 'eligible youth' means an individual who receives assistance provided under section 8(x) of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

''(ii) SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.—The term 'supportive services' may include—

''(I) basic life skills information and counseling on financial literacy, use of credit, and money management;

''(II) counseling on rental lease contracts and assistance with rental insurance; and

"(III) assistance with security deposits, utility connection fees, moving costs, and other fees associated with establishing tenancy.

"(C) EXCEPTION.—Expenditures in accordance with this paragraph shall not be considered expenditures for room and board for purposes of subsection (b)(3)(B).

"(D) ALIGNING AGE ELIGIBILITY.—Notwithstanding subsection (b)(3)(A)(ii), a State may use funds from its allotment under subsection (c) to provide supportive services to eligible youth who have not attained 26 years of age for the purpose of supporting continued access to housing."; and

(6) in subsection (g)(1), by inserting "access to housing," before "and personal".

SEC. 3. JOINT AGENCY GUIDANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Within 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, shall develop and issue joint guidance to State public child welfare agencies and public housing authorities to improve alignment and coordination of housing supportive services provided under section 477 of the So-

cial Security Act and housing assistance provided under section 8(x) of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

(b) CONTENTS.—The joint guidance shall include the following:

(1) Clarification and alignment of Federal policies to improve access to housing for youth who have experienced foster care, including youth who are in independent living arrangements while in extended foster care.

(2) Guidance on State use of funds provided under section 477 of the Social Security Act for supportive services (as defined in subsection (d)(6) of such section) to improve access to housing programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(3) Best practices for building partnerships between public child welfare agencies and public housing authorities, including ways to improve access to the supportive services.

(4) Additional information the Secretaries deem necessary to effectively coordinate Federal programs serving current and former foster youth.

(c) PRODUCTION.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall designate an official of the Department of Health and Human Services to lead development

of the joint guidance in collaboration with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Within 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a report that sets forth—

(1) aggregate data on the number of eligible youth who have experienced foster care who are receiving Federal housing assistance;

(2) a description of the outcomes for the youth, including the extent to which youth are able to access stable housing and rates of homelessness;

(3) the findings from any evaluations of State programs conducted pursuant to section 477(g)(1) of the Social Security Act; and

(4) statutory recommendations for improving coordination between public child welfare agencies and Federal housing programs.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.