

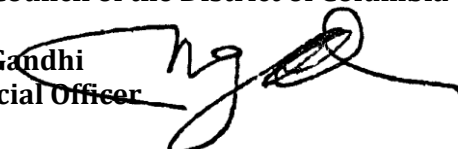
Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: November 27, 2012

SUBJECT: CORRECTED Fiscal Impact Statement – “Foster Youth Statements of Rights and Responsibilities Amendment Act of 2012”

REFERENCE: Bill 19-803 – Draft Committee Print shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on November 20, 2012

The fiscal impact statement issued on the Committee Print on November 27 incorrectly states the number of foster children as 3,141. This is the total number of children who receive services from the Child and Family Services. Among these children 1,479 are in foster care.

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

The bill advances various proposals to strengthen the mechanisms through which foster youth can be informed about their rights and responsibilities.

First, the bill requires the Mayor to update the D.C. Municipal Regulations¹ to incorporate existing rights for youth in foster care provided by any federal or local law, administrative issuances, or other policy documents (hereafter collectively called “Statements of Rights and Responsibilities”). The bill directs the Mayor to also include in the regulations foster youth’s right to receive or have their caregivers and guardians be given, at least 30 days prior to leaving care, various personal documentation such as birth certificate, original social security card, other identification cards, immunization records, medical insurance information, education and health records, immigration documents and other personal information. This provision applies to foster children under the age of 18.

¹ The bill specifies 29 DCMR § 6004, 6203, and 6303, (Statement of Rights and Responsibilities for youth in foster homes, group homes, and independent living programs).

The Honorable Phil Mendelson

FIS: Bill 19-803, "Foster Youth Statements of Rights and Responsibilities Amendment Act of 2012," Draft Committee Print shared with the Office of Revenue Analysis on November 20, 2012

The bill also requires that the updated regulations guarantee each youth under the care of Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) receive a printed copy of Statements of Rights and Responsibilities. The printed copy must include clearly written explanations of the youth's right to be informed of all decisions made on their behalf by CFSA, right to report violations of their rights to CFSA, ways in which the youth can report such violations, and ways to contact CFSA about care, placement, and services. The bill gives the Mayor 45 days to submit the updated regulations to the District Council for passive approval.

The bill also requires that all youth under the care of CFSA and their caregivers and guardians be given information on Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, and that CFSA incorporates the same information into scheduled trainings for social workers, foster parents, and other persons who are associated with the care of youth.

The bill allows the agency 90 days to develop an implementation plan to disseminate the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, to receive and handle complaints or concerns made by youth, and provide a mechanism to resolve issues regarding their care, placement or services received through CFSA. CFSA is further required to investigate and promptly resolve any complaints and concerns raised by the youth, document the source and nature of these complaints, and starting January 31, 2014, provide the Council an annual report on such complaints with data on the scale and scope of such complaints, including each instance of contact with CFSA, the nature of the contact, the number of consequent investigations, and any analysis on patterns or trends.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

At present 1,479 children are under foster care in the District of Columbia. The bill will affect the ways CFSA disseminates information to these children as well as any future foster child.

CFSA's current practices are either close to or coincide with the requirements of the legislation; therefore the agency can implement the provisions of the bill with its existing resources.