

## The Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act – Fact Sheet Senate Bill 262/House Bill 1779

### Statistics on the Issue

- Homeless youth are individuals under the age of eighteen who lack parental, foster, or institutional care.
- Approximately 1.6 million youths (7 %) ages 12 to 17 had run away from home and slept on the street in the past 12 months. (SAMHSA Office of Applied Studies, 2004)
- 7.6% of adolescents 12 to 17 years of age had spent at least one night in an emergency shelter, public place, abandoned building, or with a stranger during the previous year. (Ringwalt, Greene, Robertson, & and McPhetters, 1998)

### LGBTQ Youth

- LGBTQ youth are estimated to make up only 5 to 7 percent of the youth population but 20 to 40 percent of the homeless youth population (Quintana et al. 2010)
- A 2008 study found that LGBTQ youth in New York City were seven to eight times more likely to have traded sex to meet survival needs than their non-LGBTQ counterparts (Freeman and Hamilton 2008).

### **Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act Highlights**

- 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.
- Trafficking definitions regarding youth have been **expanded to encompass all forms of human trafficking**, whereas previously it only encompassed sex trafficking.
- Central to this bill is the funding of **Critical Housing for Youth** through the Basic Center Program and Transition Living Program. Services to minors include **temporary housing with crisis intervention, longer-term housing with supportive services with increased lengths of stay, counseling, family reunification and aftercare, job preparation, and health care.**
- 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.
- Supports **National Support Activities** including a hotline for youth to connect them to local services, providing technical and training assistance to all grantees, and coordinates the efforts of multiple federal agencies.
- Funds 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.
- Updated language by **adding human trafficking and sexually exploited youth** to the populations that street-based services target.

## Current Status of the Bill

### S. 262

**Sponsor:** Sen. Leahy (D – VT)

**Introduced:** Jan 27, 2015

**Current Status:** Held in Senate Judiciary Committee.

### HR. 1779

**Sponsor:** Rep. Reichert (R-WA), Rep. Yarmuth (D-KY)

**Introduced:** Apr 15, 2015

## Current Co-Sponsors of S.262:

Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]\*

Sen. Ayotte, Kelly [R-NH]\*

Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]\*

Sen. Franken, Al [D-MN]

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Sen. Peters, Gary C. [D-MI]

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