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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To establish an interagency task force to increase vital documents access
for unaccompanied homeless youth.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

A BILL

To establish an interagency task force to increase vital
documents access for unaccompanied homeless youth.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Vital Documents Ac-
5 cess for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE**

7 **ON VITAL DOCUMENTS ACCESS FOR UNAC-**
8 **COMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH; REPORTS.**

9 (a) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE.—

1 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days
2 after the date of the enactment of this section, the
3 covered Secretaries and the Commissioner of the So-
4 cial Security Administration shall, jointly, establish
5 the Interagency Task Force on Vital Documents Ac-
6 cess for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (referred
7 to in this section as the “Task Force”) to coordinate
8 efforts and share best policies and practices to in-
9 crease vital documents access for unaccompanied
10 homeless youth.

11 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall
13 be composed of—

14 (i) the Chair of the Task Force;

15 (ii) the Commissioner of the Social
16 Security Administration;

17 (iii) the covered Secretaries;

18 (iv) three directors of State depart-
19 ments of human services, or equivalent
20 State officials, of whom—

21 (I) one shall be appointed by the
22 President;

23 (II) one shall be appointed by the
24 majority leader of the Senate, with

1 the concurrence of the minority leader
2 of the Senate; and

3 (III) one shall be appointed by
4 the majority leader of the House of
5 Representatives, with the concurrence
6 of the minority leader of the House of
7 Representatives; and

8 (v) three representatives from national
9 nonprofit organizations that work on youth
10 homelessness, who shall be appointed by
11 the President.

12 (B) REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN MEM-
13 BERS.—The members of the Task Force ap-
14 pointed under clauses (iv) and (v) of subpara-
15 graph (A) shall each—

16 (i) have not attained the age of 30;

17 and

18 (ii) have lived-in experience for youth
19 homelessness.

20 (C) TERMS.—Each member shall serve for
21 the duration of the Task Force.

22 (D) VACANCY.—In the case of a vacancy
23 on the Task Force, such vacancy shall be filled
24 not later than 30 days after arising and in the

1 manner in which the original appointment was
2 made.

3 (E) STAFF.—

4 (i) CHAIR.—The Chair of the Task
5 Force shall be chosen, jointly, by the Com-
6 missioner of the Social Security Adminis-
7 tration and the covered Secretaries and
8 shall lead the Task Force in executing the
9 duties described under paragraph (3).

10 (ii) SUPPORT PERSONNEL.—The Task
11 Force may appoint additional support per-
12 sonnel as it considers appropriate to assist
13 in executing the duties described under
14 paragraph (3).

15 (3) DUTIES.—Beginning on the last day of the
16 first fiscal quarter after the date on which the Task
17 Force is established under paragraph (1), and quar-
18 terly thereafter, the Task Force shall meet to—

19 (A) assess and discuss—

20 (i) the progress each Task Force
21 member has made on increasing vital docu-
22 ments access for unaccompanied homeless
23 youth;

24 (ii) each policy and practice imple-
25 mented by a Task Force member that in-

1 creased vital documents access for unac-
2 companied homeless youth;

3 (iii) each challenge faced by a Task
4 Force member while working towards in-
5 creasing vital documents access for unac-
6 companied homeless youth; and

7 (iv) each method used by a Task
8 Force member to refine each policy and
9 practice implemented to improve vital doc-
10 uments access for unaccompanied homeless
11 youth;

12 (B) establish a framework for collecting
13 data on the effectiveness of each policy and
14 practice implemented by a Task Force member
15 to increase vital documents access for unaccom-
16 panied homeless youth;

17 (C) using the data collected under sub-
18 paragraph (B)—

19 (i) formulate policies and practices to
20 increase vital documents access for unac-
21 companied homeless youth; and

22 (ii) evaluate the success of each such
23 policy and practice in increasing such ac-
24 cess; and

1 (D) develop policies and practices that can
2 be implemented by Federal, State, and local
3 agencies to improve vital documents access for
4 unaccompanied homeless youth.

5 (b) REPORTS.—

6 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
8 after the date on which the Task Force is es-
9 tablished under subsection (a)(1), the covered
10 Secretaries and the Commissioner of the Social
11 Security Administration shall, jointly, submit to
12 Congress an initial report on how to increase
13 vital documents access for unaccompanied
14 homeless youth.

15 (B) ELEMENTS.—The initial report re-
16 quired under subparagraph (A) shall include
17 the following:

18 (i) The covered Secretaries shall,
19 jointly, provide—

20 (I) a detailed analysis of each
21 challenge that unaccompanied home-
22 less youth without vital documents
23 face in accessing all programs under
24 the separate and joint administrative
25 jurisdictions of the covered Secre-

1 taries, including programs related to
2 housing assistance, homelessness pre-
3 vention, health care, child welfare, or
4 other social services;

5 (II) any recommendations for
6 legislation and administrative action
7 the covered Secretaries determine ap-
8 propriate to increase access to each
9 such program by unaccompanied
10 homeless youth without vital docu-
11 ments, including enhanced training re-
12 quirements for agency staff and in-
13 creased collaboration between the
14 agencies of the covered Secretaries;

15 (III) a list of each State and
16 local policy that increased vital docu-
17 ments access for unaccompanied
18 homeless youth, as determined by the
19 covered Secretaries, and recommenda-
20 tions for legislation and administra-
21 tive action to expand such State and
22 local policy; and

23 (IV) a detailed assessment of
24 each such policy identified by the cov-
25 ered Secretaries under subclause (III)

1 and any suggestion the covered Secre-
2 taries determine appropriate to ex-
3 pand or replicate each such policy
4 within the Federal Government.

5 (ii) The Commissioner of the Social
6 Security Administration shall provide—

7 (I) a detailed assessment of each
8 policy related to issuing social security
9 cards to unaccompanied homeless
10 youth, including any discretion the
11 Commissioner has to waive any docu-
12 mentation requirement in the social
13 security card application process;

14 (II) any recommendation the
15 Commissioner determines appropriate
16 to increase social security card access
17 for unaccompanied homeless youth,
18 including enhanced training require-
19 ments for Administration staff on how
20 to better assist unaccompanied home-
21 less youth;

22 (III) any proposal for issuing
23 new educational materials, or expand-
24 ing upon existing materials, to assist
25 unaccompanied homeless youth with

1 the social security card application
2 process;

3 (IV) a plan to enhance outreach
4 and collaboration efforts among Fed-
5 eral, State, and local agencies, as well
6 as community-based organizations, to
7 increase social security card access for
8 unaccompanied homeless youth; and

9 (V) any recommendation that the
10 Commissioner determines appropriate
11 for State legislation and administra-
12 tive action to increase social security
13 card access for unaccompanied home-
14 less youth.

15 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than three
17 years after the date on which the Task Force
18 is established under subsection (a)(1), the Task
19 Force shall submit to Congress a final report.

20 (B) ELEMENTS.—The final report required
21 under subparagraph (A) shall include the fol-
22 lowing:

23 (i) Each change undertaken by a
24 Task Force member based on rec-

1 ommendations made in the initial report
2 under paragraph (1).

3 (ii) The effectiveness of each change
4 described in clause (i) in increasing vital
5 documents access for unaccompanied
6 homeless youth.

7 (iii) A detailed assessment of the mer-
8 its of making the Task Force permanent.

9 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 (1) COVERED SECRETARIES.—The term “cov-
11 ered Secretaries” means—

12 (A) the Secretary of Housing and Urban
13 Development; and

14 (B) the Secretary of Health and Human
15 Services.

16 (2) UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH.—The
17 term “unaccompanied homeless youth” means an in-
18 dividual who is—

19 (A) a homeless child or youth (as defined
20 in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless
21 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)); and

22 (B) not in the physical custody of a parent
23 or guardian.

24 (3) VITAL DOCUMENTS.—The term “vital docu-
25 ments”—

1 (A) means any State or Federal document
2 issued to an individual that can be used to es-
3 tablish the identity of such individual; and

4 (B) includes a social security card and a
5 birth certificate.

6 (d) TERMINATION.—The Task Force shall terminate
7 on the date that is three years after the date on which
8 the Task Force is established under subsection (a)(1).