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| "Together is the Only Way" was a theme of this year's ACRC conference, and when it comes to advocacy, that message is especially true. For anyone who was able to join us in person at our Public Policy Town Hall, you know that implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act was at the top of people's minds. **As promised, we are happy to announce that today a bipartisan**[**bill**](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmembers.togetherthevoice.org%2FEmailTracker%2FLinkTracker.ashx%3FlinkAndRecipientCode%3Dt5JuK5B%252buxRUV3H9tuDskvzJf8tFEPM50iTlYCSH4ShJjHgtJWmyUsoX%252fAGk8pAoZ26WnosMPy1Beyl6MYOcocSWbPWwgEM4ocdTEThcuvg%253d&data=04%7C01%7Csward%40jri.org%7C63ca50e5508e48c402b008d95c45bd88%7C80ea9c56e4584524b92a86fbf50c7a9c%7C0%7C0%7C637642276876240954%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=DFRlleu9ouTNsNpgiXQdnSD2IN%2FuPnaGrdKJly2WvBw%3D&reserved=0)**was introduced to exempt Qualified Residential Treatment Programs from the Institution for Mental Diseases exclusion for children in foster care.** In the press release below, Senators Burr (R-NC) and Feinstein (D-CA) underscored the importance of federal Medicaid to support children's health. They also highlighted the sign-on letter circulated by ACRC that made the difference in demonstrating the broad nationwide support for this legislative fix. We are truly leading the way on solving this issue to ensure children have access to the right care at the right time without putting their federal health coverage at risk.If you are among the [almost 550](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmembers.togetherthevoice.org%2FEmailTracker%2FLinkTracker.ashx%3FlinkAndRecipientCode%3DbOA1pgVmc1QulJWwVDACzlHdRMoNipUq1Dk0hFIUZtpaNQHeVaoV%252bbj%252b1yoUqwvTFbH68jZnSRxUOwo6uxo6kbs9DpJmYCZTLlaPSrYcjmY%253d&data=04%7C01%7Csward%40jri.org%7C63ca50e5508e48c402b008d95c45bd88%7C80ea9c56e4584524b92a86fbf50c7a9c%7C0%7C0%7C637642276876250912%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=FmKBk2vLLbq%2BAZTvC0yf7ML%2BkdIaj05QHv1Zh2A6BXw%3D&reserved=0) local, state, and national organizations that have joined in this effort, thank you! If your organization has not signed on and would like to demonstrate your support, you can [sign on HERE](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmembers.togetherthevoice.org%2FEmailTracker%2FLinkTracker.ashx%3FlinkAndRecipientCode%3DPNikr%252b2COQ5z8BsKk2p4JFTncGPzE77%252bb2toEAtyBKOY6I3nN0IyuTW51ljGi3ZgNydfc%252fg3hoUKy0CtJeGrdhCA5or%252fYnlh%252bxzmHCfzah0%253d&data=04%7C01%7Csward%40jri.org%7C63ca50e5508e48c402b008d95c45bd88%7C80ea9c56e4584524b92a86fbf50c7a9c%7C0%7C0%7C637642276876250912%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=0BOZWV7wfQuy5815HMizXEir8w73EIqbYPPBH7VXC9Q%3D&reserved=0).  |
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| U.S. Senator • **Richard Burr** • North CarolinaU.S. Senator • **Dianne Feinstein** • California**Senators Burr, Feinstein Introduce Legislation to Ensure Medicaid Access for Vulnerable Foster Care Children**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:Tuesday, August 10, 2021 CONTACT: Caitlin Carroll (Burr) 202-228-1616Justin Kramer (Feinstein) 202-224-9629WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Senators Richard Burr (R-NC) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) introduced the Ensuring Medicaid Continuity for Children in Foster Care Act of 2021. This bipartisan legislation would clarify existing law to ensure that the care provided for certain foster children in need of a higher level of care are covered by Medicaid.“Medicaid should not be a barrier for foster children with emotional or behavioral challenges to receive care in a setting that best meets their individual needs,” said **Senator Burr**. “It’s important that Congress continue to support these foster children by passing this legislation. I’m proud to work with Senator Feinstein on this important and commonsense initiative.”“Children in foster care deserve access to high-quality care without being at risk of losing federal Medicaid coverage,” said **Senator Feinstein**. “I’m happy to join Senator Burr in introducing this legislation to ensure the best outcome possible for children in need of these critical services and support.”**Background:**The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 (FFPSA) created a federal category of residential settings called qualified residential treatment programs (QRTPs). These programs were designed to provide care for children in foster care with assessed emotional or behavioral needs in a residential setting.The health care needs of children in foster care are covered by Medicaid. Today, however, QRTPs may not receive Medicaid financing because of the Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion, a law that prohibits Medicaid payments to a hospital, nursing facility, or other institution with more than 16 beds that primarily provides care for people with mental health conditions. Under current law, all states are required to be FFPSA compliant by October 1, 2021. Recently, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) indicated that QRTPs with more than 16 beds will be subject to the IMD exclusion, leaving many states at risk of not being able to continue providing services to this vulnerable population in QRTPs.The Ensuring Medicaid Continuity for Children in Foster Care Act of 2021 would provide a narrow exemption from the IMD exclusion to ensure children in foster care receiving care in QRTPs can continue to receive care provided in these settings without losing their federal Medicaid coverage.A letter signed by over 500 organizations has been submitted to Congressional leadership in support of this effort.###217 Russell Senate Office Building – Washington, DC 20510 – 202.224.3154 – [www.Burr.Senate.gov](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmembers.togetherthevoice.org%2FEmailTracker%2FLinkTracker.ashx%3FlinkAndRecipientCode%3DudzsCyw9DR6Qe39tPTzyaW93x%252fGc66i%252fqvs1gXQPL9rplj9d6%252fGV2I%252fXG%252b6ErMqFebOCqjaTDY3IwOneQfzBv%252f75zOSETswMsb6JccmrEAs%253d&data=04%7C01%7Csward%40jri.org%7C63ca50e5508e48c402b008d95c45bd88%7C80ea9c56e4584524b92a86fbf50c7a9c%7C0%7C0%7C637642276876260865%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=cpEAS%2BBFIwdB4nd6eiom8eR%2BoxeXcP4QwfhvwcTPGmg%3D&reserved=0) |
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| We will soon be sending out action alerts for individuals to reach out to their Senators asking that they co-sponsor this bill.**Text "acrc" to 52886 or click below to receive an alert to take action on this issue.** |
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| This message was sent to you by the Association of Children's Residential & Community services.Please email Lisette Burton, Chief Policy & Practice Advisor, with questions or for more information. |

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