



SUPPORT SB 442:
Stop DHR from Charging Abused and Neglected Children
for their Own Care

Parents and relatives can use children's SSI money this way - why can't the state?

- When a parent or relative where the child lives uses the SSI to help pay the cost of care, there is more money coming into the household where the child lives so the child directly benefits. When the state takes the foster child's funds, there is no additional money or services to the child or to the household where the child lives.
- A parent/relative will still be a resource for the child when he/she turns 21, many foster youth don't have anyone to be a resource for them once they age out at age 21.

All other states use foster youth's benefits this way, why shouldn't we?

- Morally, it's not the right thing to do; the social security benefits should not be the state's to take from these especially vulnerable children and youth.
 - Social Security Survivor benefits are there to help support a child where their parent is unable to do so. Yet, a foster youth with Social Security Survivor benefits is no better off than any other foster youth.
 - Social Security Disability benefits exist to help fill gaps for individuals with quite severe disabilities, yet, foster youth receiving social security disability benefits are no better off than any other foster youth.

Will putting foster youth's social security benefits into accounts will leave them ineligible to continue receiving the benefits because they will reach the asset limit?

- No, the Social Security Administration told DHR that ABLE accounts would be acceptable savings vehicles that will not jeopardize future benefits.

Wouldn't it be better for DHR to open savings accounts for all foster youth rather than only the foster youth receiving federal benefits?

- We are hopeful that DHR will follow through with their plans to open accounts for all foster youth ages 14 and older, and foster youth receiving social security benefits, would still be best served by having those benefits included in the new accounts.

For more information, call Senator Madaleno at (301) 858-3137, Delegate Moon at (301) 858-3474, or Melissa Rock, Child Welfare Director, Advocates for Children and Youth at (202) 460-1219.

