

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Senate Committee Report

Excerpts from the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2009

(Report No. 110-410)

PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Appropriations, 2008	\$2,997,970,000
Budget estimate, 2009	2,759,078,000
Committee recommendation	2,759,078,000

The Committee recommends \$2,759,078,000 be made available in fiscal year 2009 for payments to States for child support enforcement and family support programs. The Committee recommendation is the same as the budget request under current law. The Committee also has provided \$1,000,000,000 in advance funding for the first quarter of fiscal year 2010 for the child support enforcement program, the same as the budget request.

These payments support the States' efforts to promote the self-sufficiency and economic security of low-income families. These funds also support efforts to locate non-custodial parents, determine paternity when necessary, and establish and enforce orders of support.

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Appropriations, 2008	\$2,570,328,000
Budget estimate, 2009	2,000,000,000
Committee recommendation	2,570,328,000

The Committee recommends \$2,570,328,000 for fiscal year 2009 for the low income home energy assistance program (LIHEAP). This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008. The administration requested \$2,000,000,000 for this program. LIHEAP is made up of two components: the State grant program and a contingency fund.

The Committee recommendation includes \$1,980,000,000 for the State grant program, which is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008. The administration requested \$1,700,000,000 for this program. LIHEAP grants are awarded to States, territories, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations to assist low-income households in meeting the costs of home energy. States have great flexibility in how they provide assistance, including direct payments to individuals and vendors and direct provision of fuel. These resources are distributed by formula to these entities as defined by statute, based in part on each State's share of home energy expenditures by low-income households.

The Committee recommends \$590,328,000 for the contingency fund. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008. The administration requested \$300,000,000 for this program. The contingency fund may be used to provide assistance to one or more States adversely affected by extreme heat or cold, significant price increases, or other causes of energy-related emergencies.

REFUGEE AND ENTRANT ASSISTANCE

Appropriations, 2008	\$655,631,000
Budget estimate, 2009	628,044,000
Committee recommendation	635,044,000

The Committee recommends \$635,044,000 for refugee and entrant assistance. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$655,631,000 and the budget request is \$628,044,000.

The refugee and entrant assistance program is designed to assist States in their efforts to assimilate refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and adults and minors who are trafficking victims, into American society as quickly and effectively as possible. The program funds State-administered transitional and medical assistance, the voluntary agency matching grant program, programs for victims of trafficking and torture, employment and social services, targeted assistance, and preventive health. This appropriation enables States to provide 8 months of cash and medical assistance to eligible refugees and entrants, a variety of social and educational services, as well as foster care for refugee and entrant unaccompanied minors.

The Committee recommends \$287,000,000 for transitional and medical assistance, including State administration and the voluntary agency program. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) estimates that \$24,600,000 of prior year funding is available for use in fiscal year 2009, which will allow for a program level of \$311,600,000. This funding level is sufficient for an estimated refugee ceiling of 80,000, including an estimated 12,000 Iraqi refugees, as well as an increasing number of Iraqi and Afghan special immigrant visa arrivals. The Committee recommendation also includes: \$9,814,000 for victims of trafficking; \$154,005,000 for social services; \$4,748,000 for preventive health; and \$48,590,000 for targeted assistance.

For unaccompanied children, pursuant to section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Committee recommends \$120,070,000. Funds provided are for the care and placement of unaccompanied alien children (UAC) who are apprehended in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or other law enforcement agencies.

The Committee is committed to ensuring that UAC are expeditiously transferred from the point of DHS apprehension to initial placement in ORR facilities where they can receive the care and services they need. The Committee directs ORR to respond to DHS' initial call for placement by identifying the ORR placement facility to DHS within 6 hours, on average, of receiving the DHS call. In addition, the Committee directs ORR to continue to work with DHS to expedite the transfer and placement of those children with special needs to the most appropriate ORR facility as quickly as possible.

The Committee is aware that, during the implementation of section 462 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) did not transfer funding from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to ORR for the responsibility of transporting unaccompanied alien children to ORR facilities. This is a clear indication that the transportation of these children was determined to be the responsibility of INS and its successor agency, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Committee is further aware that ICE plans imminently to shift responsibility for transporting UAC to ORR. The Committee notes that the administration's budget request does not include funding for this responsibility in the ORR budget, nor does ORR have the transportation infrastructure in place to assume this function. In order to clarify the functions of these agencies, the Committee directs the Department to present to the Committee a joint report with OMB and DHS no later than March 1, 2009 with a recommendation for which agency is the most appropriate to fund the transportation of UAC to ORR facilities. The joint report should focus on which agency can deliver these services in the most cost effective manner.

The Committee recommendation includes \$5,000,000 for the pro bono legal services initiative. The Committee recognizes the need for unaccompanied children to be appropriately represented before immigration courts. The Committee expects ORR to use part of the funding provided to assess the overall impact of the pro bono legal services initiative.

The Committee recommendation includes funding requested by the administration to respond to unaccompanied children exposed to traumatic events.

The Committee recommends \$10,817,000 to treat and assist victims of torture. The Committee notes that a large proportion of the increasing numbers of Iraqi refugee arrivals have experienced trauma, torture and severe violence. The Committee recommendation will help address the unique mental health needs of these refugees as they attempt to rebuild their lives in the United States.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Appropriations, 2008	\$2,062,081,000
Budget estimate, 2009	2,062,081,000
Committee recommendation	2,137,081,000

The Committee recommends \$2,137,081,000 for the child care and development block grant. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$2,062,081,000, the same as the administration request. The child care and development block grant supports grants to States to provide low-income families with financial assistance for child care; for improving the quality and availability of child care; and for establishing or expanding child development programs.

The Committee recommendation continues specific set asides in appropriations language that provide targeted resources to specific policy priorities including \$19,120,350 for the purposes of supporting before and after-school services, as well as resource and referral programs. This represents the Federal commitment to the activities previously funded under the dependent care block grant. The Committee recommendation sets aside \$272,676,992 for child care quality

activities, including \$100,001,830 specifically for infant care quality. These funds are recommended in addition to the 4 percent quality earmark established in the authorizing legislation. The Committee has provided additional quality funds because of considerable research demonstrating the importance of serving children in high quality child care settings which include adequately compensated, nurturing providers who are specially trained in child development.

The Committee recommendation also provides \$10,000,307 for child care research, demonstration and evaluation activities.

The Committee recommendation for resource and referral activities also includes \$1,000,018 to continue support for a national toll-free hotline that assists families in accessing local information on child care options and that provides consumer education materials. The Committee expects the grantee to monitor the quality of services provided to families as a result of the program.

SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

Appropriations, 2008	\$1,700,000,000
Budget estimate, 2009	1,700,000,000
Committee recommendation	1,700,000,000

The Committee recommends \$1,700,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 for the social services block grant. This is the same as the comparable fiscal year 2008 level. The Committee rejects the administration's proposed bill language to lower the authorized funding level stipulated in section 2003(c) of the Social Security Act to \$1,200,000,000.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES PROGRAMS

Appropriations, 2008	\$8,980,991,000
Budget estimate, 2009	8,503,382,000
Committee recommendation	9,194,377,000

The Committee recommends \$9,194,377,000 for fiscal year 2009 for children and families services programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$8,980,991,000 and the budget request is \$8,503,382,000. The recommendation includes \$10,172,000 in transfers available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act.

This appropriation provides funding for programs for children, youth, and families, the developmentally disabled, and Native Americans, as well as Federal administrative costs.

Head Start

The Committee recommends \$7,104,571,000 for Head Start. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$6,877,976,000 and the administration request is \$7,026,571,000. The

Committee recommendation includes \$1,388,800,000 in advance funding that will become available on October 1, 2009.

Head Start provides comprehensive development services for low-income children and families that emphasize cognitive and language development, socio-emotional development, physical and mental health, and parent involvement to enable each child to develop and function at his or her highest potential. At least 10 percent of enrollment opportunities in each State are made available to children with disabilities.

The Committee has provided an increase of \$226,595,000 to the Head Start program in recognition of its vital role in providing education, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and their families. The increase will provide local programs with a cost-of-living increase and will assist them in implementing the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, including increasing enrollment among Indian and Migrant Head Start programs.

Within the total for Head Start, the Committee includes \$3,000,000 for Centers of Excellence in Early Childhood as described in section 657B of the Head Start reauthorization bill.

The Committee understands the serious need for additional and expanded Head Start facilities in rural areas and among Native American populations. The Committee believes that the Department could help serve these needy communities by providing minor construction funding, as authorized, in remote Native American communities.

The Head Start Bureau shall continue to provide the Committee with the number and cost of buses purchased, by region, with Head Start funds in the annual congressional budget justification.

Consolidated Runaway and Homeless Youth Program

The Committee recommends \$96,128,000 for the consolidated runaway and homeless youth program. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This program consists of the basic center program, which provides temporary shelter, counseling, and after-care services to runaway and homeless youth under age 18 and their families, and the transitional living program, which is targeted to older youth ages 16 to 21.

Basic centers and transitional living programs provide services to help address the needs of some of the estimated 1.3 million to 2.8 million runaway and homeless youth, many of whom are running away from unsafe or unhealthy living environments. These programs have been proven effective at lessening rates of family conflict and parental abuse, as well as increasing school participation and the employment rates of youth.

Runaway Youth Prevention Program

The Committee recommends \$17,221,000 for the runaway youth prevention program. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This

competitive grant program awards funds to private nonprofit agencies for the provision of services to runaway, homeless, and street youth. Funds may be used for street-based outreach and education, including treatment, counseling, provision of information, and referrals for these youths, many of whom have been subjected to, or are at risk of being subjected to, sexual abuse.

Child Abuse Programs

The Committee recommends \$107,799,000 for child abuse programs. The comparable level for fiscal year 2008 is \$105,359,000, the same as the administration request. The recommendation includes \$26,535,000 for State grants, \$39,575,000 for discretionary activities, and \$41,689,000 for community-based child abuse prevention.

These programs seek to improve and increase activities at all levels of government which identify, prevent, and treat child abuse and neglect through State grants, technical assistance, research, demonstration, and service improvement.

The Committee recommendation includes \$12,000,000 within child abuse discretionary activities for a home visitation initiative. The comparable level for fiscal year 2008 is \$10,000,000, the same as the administration request. This program provides competitive grants to States to encourage investment of existing funding streams into evidence-based home visitation models. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) shall ensure that States use the funds to support models that have been shown, in well-designed randomized controlled trials, to produce sizable, sustained effects on important child outcomes such as abuse and neglect. The Committee expects ACF to adhere closely to evidence-based models of home visitation and not to incorporate any additional initiatives that have not met these high evidentiary standards or might otherwise dilute the emphasis on home visitation.

The Committee recommendation includes \$500,000 to continue a feasibility study on the creation of a national child abuse registry. Funding for the feasibility study was provided last year in the Office of the Secretary.

Within the funds provided for child abuse discretionary activities, the Committee includes funding for the following items:

Project	Committee Recommendation
Addison County Parent/Child Center, Middlebury, Vermont, to support and expand parental education activities	\$250,000
Anchorage's Promise, Anchorage, AK, for a child mentoring and support program	115,000
Catholic Community Services, Juneau, AK, to implement child abuse delivery programs in Southeast Alaska	400,000
Contra Costa County, Martinez, CA, for a comprehensive plan to diminish the effects of domestic violence on children	100,000
Crisis Shelter of Lawrence County, New Castle, PA, for abuse victim services	100,000
Young Women's Resource Center, Des Moines, IA, for a child abuse prevention training program	100,000

Abandoned Infants Assistance

The Committee recommends \$11,628,000 for abandoned infants' assistance, which is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This program provides grants to public and private nonprofit agencies, State and county child welfare agencies, universities, and community-based organizations to develop, implement, and operate demonstration projects that will prevent the abandonment of infants and young children, especially those impacted by substance abuse and HIV and who are at-risk of being or are currently abandoned by providing respite care for families and caregivers and assisting abandoned infants and children to reside with their natural families or in foster care.

Child Welfare Services

The Committee recommends \$281,744,000 for child welfare services. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This program helps State public welfare agencies improve their child welfare services with the goal of keeping families together. State services include: preventive intervention so that, if possible, children will not have to be removed from their homes; reunification so that children can return home; and development of alternative placements like foster care or adoption if children cannot remain at home. These services are provided without regard to income.

The Committee continues its interest in ACF's Child and Family Services Reviews. As more States complete the second round of reviews, ACF should ensure that States are provided with appropriate resources to develop their performance improvement plans and obtain technical assistance. In particular, the Committee urges ACF to examine the need for additional resources for States in addressing child health and well-being issues. ACF should explore the possibility of expanding one of the existing National Resource Centers or, if warranted, establishing a new center on child health and wellbeing.

Child Welfare Training

The Committee recommends \$7,207,000 for child welfare training. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. These discretionary grants are awarded to public and private nonprofit institutions of higher learning to develop and improve education/training programs and resources for child welfare service providers. These grants upgrade the skills and qualifications of child welfare workers.

Adoption Opportunities

The Committee recommends \$26,379,000 for adoption opportunities, which is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This program eliminates barriers to adoption and helps find permanent homes for children who would benefit by adoption, particularly children with special needs.

Adoption Incentives

The Committee recommends \$15,000,000 for adoption incentives. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$4,323,000 and the administration request is \$19,674,000. This program provides incentive funds to States to encourage an increase in the number of adoptions of children from the public foster care system. The recommendation is sufficient to fund adoption incentives under current law.

Adoption Awareness

The Committee recommends \$12,453,000 for adoption awareness, which is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. This program consists of two activities: the infant adoption awareness training program and the special needs awareness campaign.

The infant adoption awareness training program provides grants to train health centers staff serving pregnant women so that they can inform them about adoption and make referrals on request to adoption agencies. Within the Committee recommendation, \$9,558,000 is available for this purpose.

The special needs adoption campaign supports grants to carry out a national campaign to inform the public about the adoption of children with special needs. The Committee recommendation includes \$2,895,000 to continue this important activity.

Compassion Capital Fund

The Committee recommends \$42,688,000 for the compassion capital fund (CCF). The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$52,688,000 and the administration request is \$75,000,000. The goal of this program is to help faith-based and community organizations maximize their social impact as they provide services to those most in need. The CCF administers three discretionary grant programs: a demonstration program which provides funding to intermediary organizations to provide training and technical assistance to smaller faith and community-based organizations; a program to fund capacity-building activities; and a program to build the capacity of organizations that combat gang activity and youth violence.

Social Services Research

The Committee recommends \$12,337,000 for social services research. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$21,194,000 and the budget request is \$5,762,000. The Committee recommendation includes \$5,762,000 in transfers available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act. These funds support research and evaluation projects focusing on finding programs that are cost effective, that increase the economic independence of American families and that contribute to healthy development of children and youth.

The Committee feels strongly about preventing child maltreatment and ameliorating its adverse health effects. The Committee encourages ACF to enhance its child maltreatment prevention

activities by: using population-based monitoring to capture information outside child protective services systems; promoting prevention and early intervention to identify and disseminate information about effective programs; advancing research to prevent the negative consequences of child maltreatment; and furthering the development and implementation of culturally appropriate and linguistically sensitive prevention and intervention approaches. The Committee also notes that children with disabilities are a distinct high-risk group for abuse and neglect. The Committee recommends targeted support for appropriate research, and the implementation of evidence-based prevention and early intervention efforts, for children with disabilities.

The Committee is aware of the dramatic increase in homeless children combined with the unique multiracial and multiethnic demographic environment in Hawaii. Forty-two percent of these children are under age 6, and have twice the sickness and hunger rates when compared to their peers. Studies also reveal that homeless children perform poorly in school. The Committee urges ACF to develop a knowledge base to create programs that will structure appropriate programs and services that will improve homeless children's health and learning.

Within the funds provided for social services research, the Committee includes funding for the following items:

Project	Committee Recommendation
A+ For Abstinence, Waynesboro, PA, for abstinence education and related services	\$ 25,000
Catholic Social Services, Wilkes Barre, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
City of Chester, Bureau of Health, Chester, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies, Wethersfield, CT, for the Empowering People for Success welfare-to-work initiative	400,000
Creative Visions in Des Moines, IA, for a family unification project for incarcerated individuals	150,000
Crozer Chester Medical Center, Upland, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Desormeaux Foundation, Lafayette, LA, for an expectant mother education and aid program	100,000
Elijah's Promise, New Brunswick, NJ, for the Healthy Kitchens- Healthy Lives program	50,000
Family Services and Children's Aid Society, Oil City, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Family, Inc., Council Bluffs, IA, for the FAMILY program	350,000
Guidance Center, Ridgeway, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA, for continued development of programs designed to support homeless children	150,000
Iowans for Social and Economic Development [ISED], Des Moines, IA, for a Comprehensive Asset Development Project	200,000
Keystone Central School District, Mill Hall, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Keystone Economic Development Corporation, Johnstown, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
LaSalle University, Philadelphia, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000

Local Initiatives Support Coalition Rhode Island, Providence, RI, for child care professional development and programmatic activities	200,000
Louisiana Association of United Ways, New Orleans, LA, to expand the capacity of the Louisiana 2-1-1 system	400,000
Marcus Institute, Atlanta, GA, for services for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities	100,000
Monterey County Probation Department, Salinas, CA, for a gang prevention and intervention program	1,500,000
My Choice, Inc., Athens, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Nassau County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc., Hempstead, NY, to provide legal services to low-income victims of domestic violence	400,000
Neighborhood United Against Drugs, Philadelphia, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
New Brighton School District, Brighton, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Nueva Esperanza, Philadelphia, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Ohio United Way, Columbus, OH, to expand the capacity of the 2-1-1 system	400,000
One Family, Inc., Boston, MA, for continued development of programs to designed to end family homelessness	250,000
Progressive Believers Ministries, Glenside, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Shepherd's Maternity House, Inc., East Stroudsburg, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Sheriffs Youth Programs of Minnesota, Inver Grove Heights, MN, for expansion and related expenses for foster care services	150,000
Simpson College, Indianola, IA, for Urban Studies Institute	200,000
Southern Penobscot Regional Program for Children with Exceptionalities, Bangor, ME, for services for families with autistic children	200,000
Tender Care Pregnancy Center, Inc., Hanover, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
The Jimmie Hale Mission, Birmingham, AL, for services for homeless families	100,000
TLC for Children and Families, Inc., Olathe, KS, for a transitional living program for at-risk youth	200,000
Tuscarora Intermediate Unit, McVeytown, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
United Way of the Capital Area, Jackson, MS, for 2-1-1 Mississippi for social services programs	250,000
Urban Family Council, Philadelphia, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Washington Hospital Teen Outreach, Washington, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Women's Care Center of Erie County, Inc., Erie, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
York County Human Life Services, York, PA, for abstinence education and related services	25,000
Zuni Tribe, Zuni, NM, for a program to assist foster children	275,000

Developmental Disabilities

The Committee recommends \$185,021,000 for programs administered by the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$180,021,000, the same as the administration request.

The Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) supports community-based delivery of services which promote the rights of persons of all ages with developmental disabilities. Developmental disability is defined as severe, chronic disability attributed to mental or physical impairments manifested before age 22, which causes substantial limitations in major life activities. The ADD also provides funding for election assistance for individuals with disabilities. This program is for individuals with any type of disability.

Of the funds provided, the Committee recommends \$74,482,000 for State Councils. These important entities work to develop, improve and expand the system of services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Through their activities, Councils on Developmental Disabilities provide for the inclusion and integration of individuals with developmental disabilities in the economic, political, social, cultural, religious and educational mainstream of our Nation.

The Committee recommends \$40,024,000 for protection and advocacy grants. This formula grant program provides funds to States to establish protection and advocacy systems to protect the legal and human rights of persons with developmental disabilities who are receiving treatment, services, or rehabilitation.

The Committee recommends \$17,410,000 for disabled voter services. Of these funds, \$12,154,000 is to promote disabled voter access and \$5,256,000 is for disabled voters protection and advocacy systems. The election assistance for individuals with disabilities program was authorized in the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The program enables grantees to make polling places more accessible and increase participation in the voting process of individuals with disabilities.

The Committee recommends \$14,162,000 for projects of national significance to assist persons with developmental disabilities. This program funds grants and contracts that develop new technologies and demonstrate innovative methods to support the independence, productivity, and integration into the community of persons with developmental disabilities. The Committee recommendation includes \$2,000,000 for the continuation of the National Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Center. This Center promotes leadership by families of children with disabilities in the design and improvement of family-centered and family-controlled systems of family support services, as described in section 202(b)(2) of the Families of Children with Disabilities Support Act of 2000.

The Committee recommends \$38,943,000 for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), a network of 67 centers that are interdisciplinary education, research and public service units of a university system or are public or nonprofit entities associated with universities. The Centers serve as the major vehicle to translate disability-related research into community practice and to train the next cohort of future professionals who will provide services and supports to an increasingly diverse population of people with disabilities. The Committee intends that the additional funding provided will provide a cost-of-living adjustment to existing centers, and will also establish new grants to work through partnerships with minority-serving institutions. These new grants will focus research, training and services on minority populations with disabilities.

The Committee encourages the Secretary to make funds available to establish a National Autism Family Resource and Information Center, which will provide families and other caregivers of individuals with autism spectrum disorders access to information about evidence-based interventions, services and protocols that can assist individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

Native American Programs

The Committee recommends \$45,523,000 for Native American programs. This is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request. The Administration for Native Americans (ANA) assists Indian tribes and Native American organizations in planning and implementing long-term strategies for social and economic development through the funding of direct grants for individual projects, training and technical assistance, and research and demonstration programs.

Community Services

The Committee recommends \$723,080,000 for community services programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$722,440,000 and the administration requested \$24,025,000 for this activity.

Within the funds provided, the Committee recommends \$653,800,000 for the community services block grant (CSBG), which is the same as the comparable fiscal year 2008 funding level. The administration did not request funding for this program. These funds are used to make formula grants to States and Indian tribes to provide a wide range of services and activities to alleviate causes of poverty in communities and to assist low-income individuals in becoming self-sufficient.

Several other discretionary programs are funded from this account. Funding for these programs is recommended at the following levels for fiscal year 2009: community economic development, \$31,467,000; individual development accounts, \$24,025,000; job opportunities for low-income individuals, \$5,288,000; and rural community facilities, \$8,500,000.

The Committee has included bill language clarifying congressional intent regarding disposition of intangible assets, including loans and investments, acquired under the community economic development authority of the CSBG Act. Grantees under this program make loans or investments in private business enterprises that provide job and business opportunities for low-income individuals. As the grantee receives repayments or program income from these loans or investments, it recycles these funds into other similar projects. The bill language continues the policy in place since 1999 that establishes a regulatory period of up to 12 years after the end of grant period. After that time, the intangible assets and program income become the property of the grantee provided they are used in a manner consistent with the intent of the authorizing statute. The bill language clarifies that recycled funds or program income may be used in any low-income community for any eligible purpose under the law and not be restricted to the original target area, financing, or type of project for which the grantee was originally funded.

The Committee continues to recognize the importance of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) as institutions that organize low-income communities to identify emerging challenges to economically insecure Americans and subsequently mobilize the resources, programs and partnerships needed to address local poverty conditions. The CSBG is a unique Federal resource that supports CAAs while they initiate creative responses to local poverty conditions and seek new sources of support and investment to implement their initiatives. The Committee believes that CSBG funding is an investment, analogous to venture capital, in the future of low-wage workers, retirees and their families.

The Committee notes that Office of Community Services (OCS) has failed to report on its progress in remedying many of the severe deficiencies in its oversight of the CSBG that were reported by the Government Accountability Office. OCS has also failed to comply with the direction from the fiscal year 2005 appropriations conference report to implement a training and technical assistance needs assessment and delivery plan in consultation with CSBG State and local eligible entities. The Committee expects both failures to be remedied during fiscal year 2009.

The Committee believes that training and technical assistance funding should build the local organizational resources needed to reduce poverty and rebuild communities. The Committee encourages OCS to develop and deliver the professional skills training needed by CAA leaders to undertake investments in projects that enhance their communities' future security by financing and implementing innovative housing, economic and community development partnerships. The Committee also believes that OCS should support development of linkages between local agencies, their national organizations and major academic institutions; such linkages could support dissemination to CAAs of applied research on effective responses to poverty conditions. The Committee also believes that OCS should continue to make grants to each statewide association of CAAs so they may continue and expand cost-effective training and other capacity-building services for their members.

Domestic Violence Hotline

The Committee recommends \$3,500,000 for the national domestic violence hotline. The comparable fiscal year 2008 amount is \$2,918,000, the same as the budget request. This activity funds the operation of a national, toll-free, 24-hours-a-day telephone hotline to provide information and assistance to victims of domestic violence.

Family Violence Prevention and Services

The Committee recommends \$125,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 for the family violence prevention and services program, which includes battered women's shelters. The comparable amount for fiscal year 2008 is \$122,552,000, the same as the budget request. These funds support community-based projects which operate shelters and provide assistance for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. Grantees use funds to provide counseling, self-help and referral services to victims and their children.

The Committee notes that domestic violence impacts one in four American women over their lifetimes. In addition, 15.5 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year. The Committee acknowledges the connections between domestic violence and a variety of related public health problems, such as youth violence, homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, and increased health care costs. The Committee's funding recommendation reflects its belief that the family violence prevention and services program, including battered women's shelters, not only provides critical services to victims fleeing from life-threatening violence but also prevents other costly social problems. The Committee encourages the Family and Youth Services Bureau to collaborate with other operating divisions within the Department to respond to the intersection of domestic violence and other health issues. This collaboration would be cost effective and has the potential to prevent domestic violence and many other public health concerns.

Mentoring Children of Prisoners

The Committee recommends \$48,628,000 for mentoring children of prisoners, which is the same as the comparable amount for fiscal year 2008. The administration requested \$50,000,000 for this activity. This program provides competitive grants to community organizations to create and sustain mentoring relationships between children of prisoners and adults in their community. Research indicates that mentoring programs can help children with incarcerated parents reduce their drug and alcohol use, improve their relationships and academic performance, and reduce the likelihood that they will initiate violence.

Independent Living Training Vouchers

The Committee recommends \$45,351,000 for independent living training vouchers, which is the same as the comparable fiscal year 2008 funding level and the budget request. These funds will support vouchers of up to \$5,000 per year for postsecondary educational and training for foster care youth up to 21 years of age. This program increases the likelihood that individuals who age out of the foster care system will be better prepared to live independently and contribute productively to society.

Abstinence Education

The Committee recommends \$84,827,000 for community-based abstinence education. The comparable level for fiscal year 2008 is \$113,400,000 and the administration request is \$141,074,000. The recommendation includes \$4,410,000 in transfers available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act.

The Committee has not provided funding for the administration's proposed increase or for the national abstinence media campaign. The Committee recommendation fully funds current grantee continuation costs. The Committee repeats bill language from last year's Senate report clarifying that information provided under this program must be scientifically and medically accurate. The Committee's intent is that 'scientifically and medically accurate' refers to information that is verified or supported by peer-reviewed research by leading medical, psychological, psychiatric and public health publications, organizations and agencies.

Faith-Based Center

The Committee recommends \$1,362,000 for the operation of the Department's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. This amount is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 and the budget request.

Program Administration

The Committee recommends \$196,930,000 for program administration. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$184,496,000 and the administration request is \$195,430,000.

The Committee commends the Department for its plans to establish in 2008 a Federal advisory committee on children and disasters under the authority of section 1114 of the Social Security Act. The Committee understands that this advisory committee will be charged with providing policy analysis and advice to ACF and the Secretary. This advisory committee will assess the needs of children as they relate to preparation for, response to, and recovery from all hazards, including major disasters and emergencies. The Committee understands this advisory committee will build on the evaluations of other entities and avoid unnecessary duplication, by reviewing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of various commissions, Federal, State, and local governments, and nongovernmental entities on this topic. The recommendation includes \$1,500,000 to complete this work. Funds may be used for personnel, travel and any other necessary administrative expenses. The Committee requests that ACF submit a report on the progress of this committee within 1 year of the initial meeting.

The Committee understands that pursuant to the authorizing legislation, the members of the Commission have already been appointed. To ensure that the work of the Commission is not delayed, the Committee directs the Secretary to keep in place the currently appointed members.

PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES

Appropriations, 2008	\$408,311,000
Budget estimate, 2009	408,311,000
Committee recommendation	418,311,000

The Committee recommends \$418,311,000 for promoting safe and stable families. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$408,311,000, the same as the budget request. The recommendation consists of \$345,000,000 in mandatory funds authorized by the Social Security Act and \$73,311,000 in discretionary appropriations.

Funds available through the promoting safe and stable families (PSSF) program are focused on supporting those activities that can prevent family crises from emerging which might require the temporary or permanent removal of a child from his or her own home. The program provides grants to States, territories, and tribes for provision of four broad categories of services to children and families: (1) family preservation services; (2) time-limited family reunification services; (3) community-based family support services; and (4) adoption promotion and support

services. The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-288) allocated \$20,000,000 for formula grants to States to support monthly caseworker visits to children in foster care and for competitive grants to regional partnerships to address child welfare issues raised by parent or caretaker abuse of methamphetamine or other substance.

PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE

Appropriations, 2008	\$5,067,000,000
Budget estimate, 2009	5,096,000,000
Committee recommendation	5,096,000,000

The Committee recommends \$5,096,000,000 for payments to States for foster care and adoption assistance, which includes funding for the foster care, adoption assistance and independent living programs. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2008 is \$5,067,000,000. In addition, the Committee recommendation provides \$1,800,000,000 for an advance appropriation for the first quarter of fiscal year 2010. The Committee recommendation provides the full amount requested under current law.

The foster care program provides Federal reimbursement to States for: maintenance payments to families and institutions caring for eligible foster children, matched at the Federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) rate for each State; administration and training costs to pay for the efficient administration of the foster care program; and training of foster care workers and parents.

The adoption assistance program provides funds to States for maintenance payments and the nonrecurring costs of adoption for children with special needs. The goal of this program is to facilitate the adoption of hard-to-place children in permanent homes, and thus prevent long, inappropriate stays in foster care. As in the foster care program, State administrative and training costs are eligible under this program for Federal reimbursement subject to a matching rate.

The independent living program provides services to foster children under 18 and foster youth ages 18-21 to help them make the transition to independent living by engaging in a variety of services including educational assistance, life skills training and health services. States are awarded grants based on their share of the number of children in foster care, subject to a matching requirement.

The Committee urges HHS to clarify that States may not deny eligibility for independent living services to a youth who otherwise meets the eligibility criteria but is temporarily residing out of State, and that States may not terminate ongoing independent living assistance solely due to the fact that a youth is temporarily residing out of State.