



Help “Crossover Youth” (Youth Involved in Foster Care & Juvenile Justice Systems) to Access Critical Re-Entry Services & Support

SUPPORT SB863 (Favola) / HB1743 (Brink, Peace)

The Problem: “Crossover Youth”—youth who are involved in BOTH the foster care AND juvenile justice systems, are youth **most vulnerable** to devastating and costly outcomes such as homelessness, unemployment, recidivism (with more serious charges), teen pregnancy and school dropout. **We send these youth from DSS custody into the Department of Juvenile Justice without family connections, and yet expect them to become successful on their own upon re-entry at ages 18-21.**

The Solution: Virginia should allow former foster youth who then exit Department of Juvenile Justice commitment between the ages of 18-21 **eligibility for the Independent Living services** that are available to all former foster youth who “age out” of state care without permanent family connections. The ability to access these services—which include **counseling, help completing education & help finding housing and employment**—at this crucial time of their lives can make all the difference in making sure these youth are on track to become healthy, productive, successful members of their communities.

- **SB863/HB1743** would provide these youth with critical re-entry supports that are **especially tailored to their unique needs as former foster youth**, including caseworker guidance, mentoring and an education and/or employment plan.
- **SB863/HB1743** would require that Department of Social Services caseworkers **work cooperatively with the Department of Juvenile Justice re-entry planning team** during the 90-day period prior to release to ensure the youth is on the path to either completing education or beginning employment (or both).
- **Youth in foster care who become committed to DJJ have especially critical and unique needs:**
 - Without proper care and intervention are more likely to become further and more seriously involved in the justice system.
 - Are more likely to have experienced maltreatment, and to have lived in out-of-home placements (away from family connections) during their time with either department.
 - Have combined risk factors, given involvement with both systems, including mental health care needs and special education needs.

Organizations SUPPORTING SB863/HB1743

FACES of Virginia Families

**Families and Allies of Virginia's Youth
(FAVY)**

JustChildren

**The VA League of Social Services
Executives (VLSSE)**

**Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness
(VCEH)**

The Virginia Poverty Law Center

Voices for Virginia's Children