



The Senate of West Virginia
Charleston

Secretary Bill Crouch
Commissioner Jeff Pack
One Davis Square, Suite 100 East
Charleston, WV 25301

September 28, 2021

RE: Out-of-State Foster Care Placements

Dear Secretary Crouch & Commissioner Pack,

After we each put our sons to bed last week, we read a heartbreaking account of our out-of-state foster placements in WV written by Amelia Knisely of Mountain State Spotlight. Having worked with young people in similar circumstances in the past, it rang true to their experience as well, leaving us very concerned for the precious young people in the care of the state.

In order to work towards appropriate legislative responses to this serious situation, we request the following information from DHHR.

- A full accounting of visits both in-person and electronically by DHHR social workers to children placed in out-of-state institutions over the last three years
- A full accounting of annual inspections of out-of-state institutions over the last three years
- A full accounting of financial costs accrued by the state in each out-of-state foster placement over the last three years
- A full accounting of out-of-state facilities where placements have been halted over the past ten years
- Internal policies and practices which pertain to how out-of-state facilities are chosen as placements for WV foster children
- An accounting of the types of acute needs that require out-of-state placement (for I imagine some children's needs can't be met in-state)
- Policy proposals you would suggest to address these issues, which we are happy to submit working with you this coming session

Thank you for your attention to these requests. We are committed to working with you to find new policy approaches which can benefit foster children with unique and pressing needs. While there is no panacea, history shows that we can make a difference by focusing our attention on the issue and giving each child the attention they deserve.



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Blessings to you in your important work. Again, thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Baldwin".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Lindsay".

Senator Stephen Baldwin and Senator Rich Lindsay

cc: Jeff Pack