



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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Grassley's Bill to Help Children Affected by Methamphetamine Wins Final Passage

WASHINGTON – Sen. Chuck Grassley today won final passage of a House-Senate agreement on his legislation to improve child welfare services, and re-authorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, as well as target resources to improve access to family treatment programs that help families in Iowa and elsewhere overcome methamphetamine and other substance abuse and addiction and the resulting family trauma. The House today gave the bill final approval, clearing the measure for the President's expected signature.

When the bill becomes law, among other benefits, the State of Iowa as well as substance abuse treatment providers and others in the state of Iowa will be able to apply for up to \$1 million in grants to form a regional partnership to address methamphetamine or other substance abuse issues.

"Methamphetamine addiction affects entire families, not just the person abusing the drug," Grassley said. "It makes sense to treat the entire family, especially when the treatment can keep families together and minimize children's exposure to foster care. Iowans and other Midwesterners have been very helpful in coming to Washington to tell their stories and help to shape this bill, and I'm grateful for their generosity and honesty."

The effects of methamphetamine abuse on the child welfare system were highlighted during the spring of this year when Grassley held a hearing in the Finance Committee, which he chairs, and heard testimony from Allison Bruno of Cedar Rapids. Bruno is the mother of two children and has been clean and sober from meth for three years. She graduated from the Heart of Iowa family treatment program and is a member of the Moms Off Meth Iowa-based support group. She is attending college and said she intends to be a social worker focused on helping other mothers who suffer from substance abuse.

Other highlights of the Senate-House agreement include:

- Targeted funding to help states meet a standard of monthly visits for 90 percent of children in foster care;
- Improvements to the Child Welfare Service Act to help align the program with the prevention activities of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program;
- Increased access to mentoring under the Mentoring of Children of Prisoners Program;

- Increased access to funding for Indian tribes.

“This legislation received fast consideration by congressional standards,” Grassley said. “It seems more senators and House members understand the need to focus on improvements to child welfare programs and, thanks to Iowa families, the impact of the methamphetamine epidemic on children and families. “