



Homeless Children and Youth Act Advocacy Tools 2026

The Homeless Children and Youth Act (HCYA), a federal bipartisan bill, has been a longtime priority for Family Promise. If passed, it would help to get critical resources to more families with children who are experiencing homelessness.

Child and family homelessness is on the rise in the United States, but for decades, the bulk of federal homelessness resources, attention, and energy have been directed to visibly homeless adults, including and especially those who are chronically homeless.

This prioritization has been to the detriment of children and families, who are often automatically deemed to be less vulnerable due to the more hidden forms of homelessness they experience. In practice, this means families and youth are often not eligible to receive or even be assessed for federal assistance administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) until they are in situations deemed “homeless enough” for services, forcing children and youth into unsafe situations that risk child welfare involvement before they can get help.

Many homeless adults first experienced homelessness as children or youth and suffered various adverse events that impacted them throughout life. Efforts to intervene before children and youth reach adulthood can prevent later bouts of more entrenched homelessness. This legislation would help more families with children experiencing homelessness be assessed for and receive homelessness assistance services.

The bill numbers are H.R. 6403/S. 1667 in this current session of Congress. This legislation is now led by Reps. Mike Lawler (R-NY-17) and Janelle Bynum (D-OR-5) in the House and Sens. Katie Britt (R-AL) and Angela Alsobrooks (D-DE) in the Senate.

Two of the best ways for stakeholders to push for HCYA’s enactment are:

1. **Reach out to your Members of Congress** to express your support for this legislation and to **ask for co-sponsorship**. The more members of Congress who add their names as co-sponsors to the bill, the more likely it is that HCYA will move forward. A letter template linked below to help you with this ask.
2. **Promote this bill broadly to external audiences**. Raise awareness of the challenges of the system as it is, and how current policies negatively impact children. Engage

volunteers, members of your COC, and other stakeholders to make calls to Congress, write letters, share on social media, etc. Engage the news media on the barriers that families face in accessing homeless services and share key data from your community. The more attention that you can raise, the more likely you are to get the attention of your Members of Congress.

Tools and Resources

- [Full Bill Text](#)
- [Talking Points](#)
- [Fact Sheet](#)
- [Template Letter to Members of Congress](#)
- [List of Past House Cosponsors](#)
- [List of Past Senate Cosponsors](#)
- [List of Other Organizations that Support HCYA](#)