

U.S. Rep. Moore: Introduces Family Poverty is Not Child Neglect Act

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Today, Congresswoman Gwen Moore, Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, introduced the Family Poverty is Not Child Neglect Act, legislation that would make clear that child welfare agencies should not separate children from their parents solely due to poverty. In response, she released the following statement:

“The child welfare system must reflect the reality that simply being poor is not child neglect and sufficient reason alone to separate families, creating unnecessary trauma and hardships. I know firsthand that in child welfare cases, where poverty is the only issue causing hardship, children benefit from remaining with their families and accessing the resources they need.

The cost of raising children and surviving– securing adequate childcare, housing, clothing, food – is all expensive and can be incredibly difficult for families to afford.. Too many find themselves interacting with the child welfare system not because they are not loving or good parents, but because of the parent’s lack of resources to address housing, food, health care, and other basic needs.

Instead of traumatic family separations that often punish those in poverty, my legislation would ensure our child welfare system cannot use poverty as the sole reason for splitting up families. And it further requires child welfare agencies to instead work with families to address any supportive services to address basic needs such as housing and food for families who need it most – helping keep parents and children together.”

Text of this legislation was included in legislation reauthorizing the Child Abuse, Prevention, and Treatment Act (CAPTA) that passed the House in the last two Congresses.