Recent Federal Initiatives:

Fostering the Future Accounts	• **Provision:** Allows state welfare agencies to open Trump accounts for eligible foster youth, making the funds accessible when youth turn 18. • **Restriction:** Only children born between 2025-2028 are eligible for the 1K seed deposit from the U.S. Treasury.

A Home for Every Child	• **Goal:** Aims for a 1:1 ratio of foster homes and foster youth.
	• **Challenge:** Ohio would need over 7K additional foster homes.
	• **Considerations:**
	  ○ How to ensure quality foster homes, not just quantity?
	  ○ Helping youth who self-report abuse and aren't listened to...
	  ○ What will supports for families look like?
	• **All 50 states have signed on:**
	  ○ States who sign on won't face financial penalties on the CFSR and can disregard 14 administrative CFSR measures.

The Fostering the Future Bill combines six previous federal bills into one:

Fostering the Future Housing Opportunity Act:	• **Expands Ability to Use Chafee for Housing:** Removes the current restriction that states can only use 30% of Chafee funding on housing. • **Eligibility Expansion:** Extends eligibility for Chafee-funded housing supportive services up to the age of 26. • **Strategic Alignment with FYI vouchers:** Requires HUD and ACF to work together to provide states with guidance and support, and strengthen the bridge between child welfare and housing. States would gain flexibility to spend more money on housing navigation, financial counseling, security deposit assistance, and landlord mediation.
Proposed changes to ETV *(Combines the Foster Youth Workforce and Postsecondary Acts)*	• **ETV promotion:** Requires states to conduct active, targeted outreach so more eligible youth are aware of available funds. • **Workforce Programs:** Extends voucher eligibility to cover short-term workforce and vocational training, apprenticeships, GED courses, etc. • **Grace Period:** Establishes a grace period for students, preventing them from immediately losing their vouchers due to academic setbacks
	• **Funding Cap:** Increases the maximum ETV cap from 5K to 12K. • **Eligibility Expansion:** Expands ETV eligibility from youth who "age out" of foster care to those who experience foster care at age 14 or older. while maintaining current funding levels. • **Cost-Neutral:** The bill does not increase ETV funding levels to cover expanded eligibility criteria and greater amount of maximum funding for each student.
The Other Three Bills:	• **Fresh Starts for Foster Youth Act:** Would require states to certify that case planning for foster youth considers legal issues, such as cleaning up criminal records, addressing identity theft, etc. • **Support for Expectant and Parenting Foster Youth Act:** Requires states to connect expectant/parenting foster youth with resources. • **CONNECT Act, H.R. 7995:** Chafee funds can be used to help foster youth engage in their own permanency process and planning for independence.