

**Wally
Herger**
Congressman

2nd District - California



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Herger Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Recent HHS Report on Foster Care Financing

The Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources, chaired by Congressman Wally Herger, held a hearing to examine the findings of a new Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) report detailing how the current funding structure for foster care fails to meet the needs of children. The report found that spending per child varied widely from state to state and that more spending did not necessarily mean better outcomes for foster care children.

"The fact that some states are receiving \$5,000 per child annually, compared with more than \$40,000 per child in other states, with no documented evidence of improved outcomes for these children, tells us we have a problem of the greatest magnitude," Herger said.

Chairman Herger has expressed concern about the problems with the financing of the current foster care system and the plight of far too many children trapped in the system. He has advocated for reforms that will provide states more flexibility to pay for neglect and abuse prevention initiatives and for activities that will allow more children to be placed in safe, permanent homes.

"Simply throwing more money at the system will not mean better outcomes for children," Herger stated. "Today's report provides glaring evidence that more money does not necessarily equal better results. We need to move beyond partisanship and focus on improving outcomes for these kids."

"The protection of these children is our paramount concern, and I am gravely concerned that the system is failing too many kids. In the months ahead, we will continue to work on developing solutions to ensure children are being protected and money is being spent wisely and in the most effective way."

For more information, log on to <http://www.house.gov/herger> on the Internet!

The HHS report is available at the following link: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/05/fc-financing-ib/index.htm>. Highlights from the report include:

1) The current funding structure has not resulted in high quality services. The average amount of Federal foster care funds received by States ranges from \$4,155 to \$41,456 per eligible children per year, but the amount received bears little relationship to service quality or outcomes.

2) The current funding structure is inflexible, emphasizing removal of children from their own homes and placement into foster care. Title IV-E funds foster care on an unlimited basis without providing for services that would either prevent the child's removal from the home or speed permanency.

More information and background about the hearing, including witness testimony, can be found at <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/hearings.asp?formmode=detail&hearing=418>.

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