



2026 Angels in Adoption® FEDERAL ADVOCACY PREP SHEET

What to know before you walk into a congressional office

You've done this work at the state level and you know the systems, the families, and the stakes. Federal advocacy runs on the same instincts, with a few differences: meetings are shorter (often 15–30 minutes), staffers (not just Members) are your primary audience, and the ask is usually more specific. This sheet gives you the top legislative priorities to carry into your meetings and the federal data points that back up your story.

How to use this sheet:

- Read the priorities on the next page and choose one that connects most directly to your own story. You do not need to speak to all. You are also welcome to identify another federal priority that feels most relevant to your experience and make that the focus of your conversation.
- Lead with your personal experience, then bridge to the ask. Staffers remember stories; they act on specific, concrete requests.
- Reference any federal data points to show the need is documented, in addition to anecdotal.

Federal Data & Resources

AFCARS (DOMESTIC)

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (FY 2025)



HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF) collects case-level data on every child in foster care and every finalized adoption from foster care through AFCARS. It is the standard federal source for figures like the number of children in care, the number waiting for adoption, and time-to-permanency.

DOS (INTERNATIONAL)

U.S. Department of State (DOS) Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption (FY 2025)



The Office of Children's Issues publishes an annual report on intercountry adoptions to and from the U.S., including country-by-country case counts and trends. It's the standard citation for questions about intercountry adoption volume and trajectory. View the [Adoption Statistics Dashboard](#).

501,745

served by the foster care system.

331,747

youth in foster care.

64%

of youth spend more than one year in foster care.



46%

77,745

youth reunified.



26%

43,380

youth adopted from foster care.



973

youth adopted internationally, a 95% decrease from 2000.

India & Columbia are the top two countries of origin for international adoptions.

CRS REPORT

Federal Role in Adoption and Congressional Acts in Support of Permanency



This Congressional Research Service (CRS) report from June 2026 discusses the federal role in adoption. It then outlines selected legislation approved by Congress in support of permanency through adoption and legal guardianship, and provides a more detailed time line of the legislation addressing the actions.

EFC REPORT

Extended Foster Care



This CCAI report from July 2026 reviews the federal and state policy landscape of extended foster care, summarizes research on its impact, and identifies opportunities to strengthen support for young people as they transition to adulthood.

CAUCUS LIST

119th Congress Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) Caucus List



The current list of Members of Congress who belong to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) Caucus. Founded in 1985, the CCA is the historically largest bipartisan, bicameral caucus in the U.S. Congress. In this 119th Congress, there are 135 Members from 46 states plus D.C.

LEG. TO WATCH

CCAI's 119th Congress Legislation to Watch



CCAI's running tracker of adoption and child welfare bills moving through the 119th Congress. Use it to confirm current bill numbers, sponsors, and status before finalizing the specific asks.

Current Priority Bipartisan Legislation



Issue Area #1

Making private domestic infant adoption more ethical

ADOPT Act (H.R. 6170 / S. 3285)
Adoption Deserves Oversight, Protection, and Transparency Act

Domestic infant adoption depends on trust among birth parents, adoptive families, and the professionals who guide them. Inconsistent standards across states and a lack of uniform federal guardrails around fees, disclosure, and birth-parent counseling create openings for unethical practice and fraud in adoption.

What it does:

- Promotes greater transparency, accountability, and ethical safeguards in private domestic infant adoption.
- Encourages consistent standards and oversight to protect children, expectant parents, and adoptive families throughout the adoption process.

Why it matters:

- Establishes federal safeguards for private domestic interstate adoptions by limiting the use of unlicensed adoption intermediaries and promoting the use of licensed, regulated adoption providers.
- Seeks to protect expectant parents, adoptees, and adoptive families from exploitation while promoting transparency, accountability, and ethical adoption practices.
- Addresses concerns about the commodification of children in private domestic adoptions.

What's happened so far:

- The bipartisan ADOPT Act was introduced.
- Congressional conversations have continued to highlight concerns related to informed consent, advertising practices, financial assistance, and inconsistent protections across states.

Issue Area #2

Supporting older youth transitioning into adulthood

Fostering the Future Act (H.R. 7432)

Each year, thousands of young people age out of foster care without the resources and connections needed for a successful transition to adulthood. This priority modernizes the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood ("Chafee"), the primary federal program supporting older youth aging out.

What it does:

- Modernizes the Chafee Program to better meet the needs of young people leaving foster care.
- Expands flexibility for states to provide appropriate supports — e.g., housing, education, employment, financial capability, and permanent connections.
- Updates outdated program requirements to reflect the realities of today's transition-aged youth.

Why it matters:

- Thousands of young people age out of foster care every year without the resources and connections needed for a successful transition to adulthood.
- Strong transition supports can improve long-term outcomes and help young people build stable, independent futures.

What's happened so far:

- The House passed the Fostering the Future Act (H.R. 7432), a bipartisan package bundling six Chafee reform bills to modernize supports for older youth transitioning out of foster care. Six companion bills have been introduced in the Senate.
- The legislation responds directly to recommendations from young people with lived experience — including CCAI Foster Youth Internship (FYI) alumni — and represents the most significant update to the Chafee Program since its enactment in 1999.

Other Issues

Supporting kinship families

Ensure national technical assistance center has capacity to support kinship caregivers and families with supports and resources to thrive.

Family recruitment gap

States lack data-driven recruitment plans, leaving chronic shortages of foster families. Increase innovation in states by using data on placement needs and family characteristics to improve recruitment, retention, and kinship matching.

Data transparency and tracking

No robust federal system tracks intercountry adoptees' long-term outcomes, or adoption disruptions/dissolutions domestically which makes it hard to prove need or measure impact of any policy.

Supporting transition-age foster youth

Ensuring young people transition from foster care to adulthood have the opportunity to access extended foster care, support, and resources.

Asset building for foster youth

Support states and philanthropic organizations make unlimited contributions to foster youth "Trump Accounts," building on the Fostering the Future Accounts initiative to give them a financial foundation.

Decline in intercountry adoption

(~95% drop from its mid-2000s peak to today)

Much of this reflects real progress — stronger family preservation and in-country prevention systems abroad. But it leaves an open question for children who still don't find permanency in-country.

Adoptee citizenship gap

Close that loophole that left intercountry adoptees without citizenship and grant them citizenship regardless of age at adoption.

Post-adoption support gap

Federal/state systems fund the placement, but post-adoption mental health, disruption/dissolution prevention, and family support services are thin and inconsistent.

General tips for making the ask:

- Make a specific ask, thank the Member or congressional staff for their time and any work they have already done on the issue, and remind them that CCAI and the Adoption Caucus are available as resources.
- If the Member or staff is not already involved, encourage them to join the Adoption Caucus.
- For active legislation, ask the Member to cosponsor the bill or support its passage, particularly if it aligns with their priorities or interests.