

## S. 1800/H.R.3946, the FASD RESPECT ACT

The FASD RESPECT Act of 2023 reauthorizes programs and funding to aid individuals and families impacted by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS), Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND), Neurobehavioral Disorders Associated with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (ND-PAE), and related conditions. FASD is caused by prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE)—an enduring public health issue throughout the United States. A recent prevalence study identified as many as 1 in 20 first graders across the country impacted by FASD. Most individuals with FASD show no outward physical symptoms but experience damage to their brain, kidneys, heart, and other body systems. There is no cure for FASD, but research shows that FASD-specific early intervention services can improve developmental outcomes. PAE is the leading known cause of developmental disabilities, and those with FASD may face many social, cognitive, and emotional challenges throughout their lifespan.

The cardinal 1996 report of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) found that prenatal alcohol exposure, of all commonly misused substances, causes far greater long-lasting harm than other drugs. Prenatal use of alcohol is more common than the use of other substances, but over 40 percent of these pregnancies are also exposed to one or more other substances including, nicotine, cannabis, opiates, cocaine, and methamphetamines.

The FASD Respect Act calls for a prompt, coordinated response to PAE and all prenatal substance exposures to preserve the health and well-being of our nation's children and families.

### **This legislation:**

Reauthorizes federal FASD programs by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish or continue a comprehensive FASD prevention, identification, intervention, and services delivery program which may include:

- Educational and public awareness programs targeting professionals in systems of care
- Research on FASD as appropriate
- Building State and Tribal capacity for the identification, treatment, and support of individuals with FASD and their families.

Establishes Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Centers for Excellence to build local, Tribal, State, and national capacities to prevent the occurrence of FASD and other related adverse conditions, and to respond to the needs of individuals with FASD and their families.

### **Programs:**

- Initiating or expanding diagnostic capacity
- Developing and supporting public awareness and outreach activities
- Acting as a clearinghouse for evidence-based resources on FASD prevention, identification, and culturally aware best practices
- **Disseminating** ongoing research and developing resources on FASD to help inform systems of care for individuals with FASD across their lifespan.
- **Increasing** awareness and understanding of efficacious, evidence-based FASD screening tools and culturally- and linguistically appropriate evidence-based intervention services and best practices across systems of care
- Improving capacity for State, Tribal, and local affiliates dedicated to FASD awareness, prevention, and identification and family and individual support programs and services (technical assistance provided by FASD Center of Excellence).

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