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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To support State efforts to record all child welfare interviews.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mrs. WAGNER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To support State efforts to record all child welfare interviews.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Generate Recordings
5 of All Child protective Interviews Everywhere Act” or the
6 “GRACIE Act of 2026”.

7 **SEC. 2. CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE INTERVIEW RECORD-**
8 **ING GRANTS.**

9 (a) GRANTS.—The Associate Commissioner may
10 award grants to States for the purpose of assisting State

1 agencies responsible for conducting child welfare inter-
2 views in recording and retaining all child welfare inter-
3 views conducted by such State agencies.

4 (b) APPLICATION.—A State seeking a grant under
5 this section shall submit an application to the Associate
6 Commissioner at such time and in such manner as the
7 Associate Commissioner may require. Such application
8 shall include—

9 (1) the State’s lead agency for the grant pro-
10 gram and that agency’s current requirements involv-
11 ing the recording and retention of child welfare
12 interviews;

13 (2) the challenges the State faces in developing,
14 implementing, and monitoring requirements involv-
15 ing the recording and retention of child welfare
16 interviews; and

17 (3) a description of how the State plans to use
18 funds for activities described in subsection (c).

19 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts received under a
21 grant under this section shall be used exclusively for
22 costs directly associated with conducting and retain-
23 ing for 5 years the recording of all child welfare
24 interviews by a State agency responsible for con-
25 ducting child welfare interviews, including initial

1 interviews conducted during a family assessment to
2 the extent practicable.

3 (2) RECORDING REQUIREMENT.—A State re-
4 ceiving a grant under this section shall have a stat-
5 ute, ordinance, policy, or practice requiring all child
6 welfare interviews conducted by the State agency re-
7 sponsible for conducting child welfare interviews to
8 be recorded through electronic audio recording, body
9 camera video, or any other reasonable means of re-
10 cording.

11 (3) RETENTION REQUIREMENT.—A State re-
12 ceiving a grant under this section shall have a stat-
13 ute, ordinance, policy, or practice requiring the re-
14 cordings described in paragraph (2) to be retained
15 and stored for not less than 5 years in a manner
16 consistent with the protocols established by the State
17 for such recordings, which shall include that—

18 (A) a copy of such recording—

19 (i) subject to clause (ii), may only be
20 released to appropriate government agen-
21 cies investigating an allegation or pros-
22 ecuting an offense relating to an allega-
23 tion; and

24 (ii) upon request by a caregiver or
25 guardian in connection with a judicial pro-

1 ceeding, shall be made available to the
2 caregiver or guardian, unless the court or-
3 ders otherwise;

4 (B) a penalty is imposed for a violation of
5 the limitation described in subparagraph (A);
6 and

7 (C) the retention systems of the State
8 agency responsible for conducting child welfare
9 interviews securely manage the storage and dis-
10 tribution of such a recording with access con-
11 trols and role-based permission management.

12 (d) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

13 (1) RECORDS.—A State that receives a grant
14 under this section shall maintain such records as the
15 Associate Commissioner may require to facilitate an
16 effective audit relating to the receipt of the grant,
17 the use of amounts from the grant, or outsourcing
18 activities.

19 (2) ACCESS.—For the purpose of conducting
20 audits and examinations, the Associate Commis-
21 sioner shall have access to any book, document, or
22 record of the State agency that receives a grant
23 under this section if the Associate Commissioner de-
24 termines that the book, document, or record relates
25 to—

1 (A) the receipt of the grant; or

2 (B) the use of amounts from the grant.

3 (e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER.—The term “As-
5 sociate Commissioner” means the Associate Commis-
6 sioner of the Children’s Bureau of the Office of the
7 Administration for Children and Families of the De-
8 partment of Health and Human Services.

9 (2) CHILD WELFARE INTERVIEW.—The term
10 “child welfare interview” means a documented inter-
11 view with any relevant parties, including a child or
12 an adult, conducted by a State agency responsible
13 for conducting child welfare interviews in order to
14 elicit information regarding concerns of abuse of a
15 child, neglect of a child, or other crimes against a
16 child.

17 (3) STATE.—The term “State” means—

18 (A) each of the several States;

19 (B) the District of Columbia;

20 (C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

21 and

22 (D) any territory or possession of the
23 United States.

24 (f) FUNDING AND SUNSET.—For each of fiscal years
25 2026 through 2031, the Associate Commissioner shall use

1 not more than \$30,000,000 of the amounts appropriated
2 to carry out subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social
3 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) to carry out this sec-
4 tion.