

**THE PEW COMMISSION ON CHILDREN IN
FOSTER CARE**

PRESENT:

**“FOSTERING THE FUTURE: SAFETY, PERMANENCE
AND WELL-BEING FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE”**

SPEAKERS:

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CAROL EMIG: Ladies and gentlemen, if you'll have your seats please we'll begin. Good morning. I'm Carol Emig. I'm executive director of The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care. It's my pleasure to welcome you this morning and to introduce the members of the Pew Commission: former Congressman, Bill Frenzel, Chairman of the Commission; former Congressman, Bill Gray, Vice Chairman of the Commission; Polly Arango, Founder of Family Voices; Chief Justice Maura Corrigan, state of Michigan; Mr. Glenn DeMots, President of Bethany Christian Services; Helen Jones-Kelley, Executive Director, Montgomery County, Ohio Children's Services; Judge Patricia Macias, Presiding Judge, 388th Judicial District, El Paso, Texas; Cristina Silva, on the end there, student, New York University; Carol Spigner, Kenneth L.M. Pray Distinguished Professor, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work; Gary Stangler, Executive Director, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative; Judge William Thorne, Judge of the Utah Court of Appeals; and Clarice Walker, Associate Professor Emeritus, Howard University.

There are several members of the commission who were not able to be with us today in Washington, but I want to acknowledge their strong contributions to our work: William Bell, Commissioner, New York City Administration for Children's Services; State Senator Angela Monson, Assistant Majority Leader, Oklahoma Senate, and immediate Past President of the National Conference of State Legislatures; Joy Osofsky, Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Public Health, Louisiana State University, Health Sciences Center; and William Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts, California Administrative Offices of the Courts.

We are also honored to have with us today the President of The Pew Charitable Trust, Rebecca Rimel, and I'm happy to welcome her to the podium this morning.

Thank you.

REBECCA RIMEL: Thank you very much and good morning. Riding down on the train this morning I was thinking what it would be like to go to sleep tonight not knowing if I would have a home tomorrow, not knowing where I might sleep tomorrow night. Well, that's just what it's like for 500,000 children who are in foster care in America today. The average child in foster care lives with three different families and stays in foster care, sometimes over two years. They're unsure where they'll be the next day, whether they'll be moved to a new family, a new school, a new community, whether they'll ever see their siblings again, and perhaps most importantly, whether they'll ever have a family to call their own.

I think there can be no doubt that this country is clearly failing these children. We have an obligation to ensure that no child languishes in foster care and that they are in

safe, permanent homes. No child in this country should expect less and no citizen should accept anything less.

Today the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care is providing recommendations to help us fulfill this responsibility to our most vulnerable children. For more than 50 years at The Pew Charitable Trust, we have worked to help children in their time of greatest need. We've worked to advance policy solutions on a range of pressing national issues. I think there can be no doubt that there are few more pressing issues than this one.

When we decided to launch this initiative in '02, we did so because the need was certainly compelling, but also because we believe that there was strong bipartisan support to act if a consensus could be formed on practical evidence-based and achievable solutions. Well, that's exactly what this commission has done. It focused on improving federal financing and the court oversight, two issues underlying many problems that face the child welfare system today.

And, my, it's been a long and challenging road, but look what they've accomplished in just one year. First I want to thank the families and children who provided input. Their compelling stories and critical guidance was invaluable. And a special note of gratitude to the commissioners -- I'm pleased so many of them are here today -- and their stellar staff for their tireless work in shining a spotlight on the problems, and most importantly, helping forge a consensus where there had been none before. And to the Commission Chair, Bill Frenzel, and Vice Chair, Bill Gray, whose skillful leadership, commitment, wisdom and persistence to improve the lives of these children all brought us here to this point.

The Commission has made an extraordinary contribution with the report, "Fostering the Future." The report addresses problems that can be fixed, and they can be fixed now. And most importantly it gives hope to children in foster care that they can move to secure and stable permanent families and homes.

It's now my privilege and honor to introduce the co-chair of the commission, Bill Gray, a fellow Philadelphian, a statesman, a civic steward, and a wonderful person, and it's been a pleasure to benefit from his leadership and inspiration on this project and many others. When I called him to ask him if he would co-chair the commission, he answered the call as he has so many times before: with humility, good humor, and as always, an eagerness to serve his fellow citizen, and in this case, the children who need us most. We are all much in Bill Gray and Bill Frenzel's debt. Thank you.

Bill?

(Applause.)

WILLIAM GRAY: To Rebecca and The Pew Charitable Trusts for the opportunity to serve, to Carol Emig and a wonderful staff of this commission, I want to

just say a few things. First of all, foster care is an absolute critical public service, so on behalf of every member of the Pew Commission, I first want to recognize and say thank you to the thousands of Americans who have opened their homes, their lives to these children: foster parents, parents who adopt children from foster care, adults who become legal guardians.

I also want to recognize and thank the dedicated caseworkers and attorneys and judges who shepherd these children through the confusing and frustrating world of child welfare. Foster care protects children who cannot stay safely in their own homes, but taking children out of a dangerous situation is only half the job. Once children are in foster care, we have to make sure we are doing everything we can to help them safely rejoin their families, or get them into safe and permanent families. This isn't happening for a lot of children. What should be a temporary safe haven has become a long ordeal for many children in foster care. Almost half of the kids in foster care are there at least two years. Almost one in five children are there five or more years, and it's not unusual for them to move from one foster home to another to another without notice, without any expectation that their next home will be anything other than another temporary way station, without knowing if or when they will ever go home or join a permanent family.

Children need the grounding of a permanent home. You don't get that in foster care. You get it in a family. In the last year we met a lot of kids of foster care, and they broke our hearts. One young man said that the thing – the first thing that he did every day when he got home from school was to check whether his belongings had been packed. We met a young woman who learned from an early age to carry her school records with her so that every time she moved to a new foster home in a new school district she could show the principal what grades she should be in. We met twin sisters who spend their whole childhood apart from each other because they were put in different foster homes. They used to run away just to see each other and spend time together. No child should have to do that. No child should have to live this way. All children need safe, permanent families that love, nurture, protect and guide them.

That was our starting point as a commission, the guiding principle of our work in this commission, and it is a powerful statement. The recommendations that we are putting forward today will safely lower the number of children in foster care, shorten the time children spend there, and take better care of them while they are in foster care, and after they leave foster care.

Before I yield the floor to Bill Frenzel, my good friend and former colleague, I want to say a word about why we are doing this now. Why are we putting forward these proposals in a time of record deficits, and as some would say, some degree of gridlock? Well, first, because we think this issue is different. Foster care is one of those rare issues that can cut across partisan lines. This is an opportunity to make some progress right now for a group of kids who desperately need it.

Secondly, we are also coming forward now because there is tremendous progress in individual states, communities and courts across the country to help children leave

foster care safely or stay safely with their own family in the first place. We have on our commission some of the administrators and judges who have led the way in reform across this land. It's time for their successes to be the rule, not the exception.

And finally, the reason we are coming forward is simply this: there's a half a million children in foster care who have been waiting long enough for a permanent home and a family. That's why we're doing it now. It's time to act.

I want to introduce the person who has served as our chair, someone that I had the privilege and honor of knowing in the House of Representatives. He is from Minnesota. He served 20 years in the House of Representatives building up a tremendous reputation as a leader and as a thoughtful public policy maker. He was on the Ways and Means Committee and the Budget Committee. I would like to call on the chair of the commission, Representative Bill Frenzel.

(Applause.)

BILL FRENZEL: Thank you very much, Bill Gray. Thanks to all the member of the commission, the staff of the Pew Charitable Trust, our screenwriters, producers, directors, and so on. We are proud to present this report to you today. The commission's goal was to improve the circumstances of children in foster care. We focused specifically on federal financing and court oversight, and we believe that improvements in these areas will be really significant for the long-term enhancement of all foster care.

We were guided in our work by the principle that every child needs a safe, permanent family. As a package, our recommendations focus on what the states and courts have to do to help children get safe, permanent homes.

Let me begin with the commission's financing recommendations. The current federal financing system encourages foster care at the expense of other options that might safely keep families together, to reunite them or to move children more quickly into adoptive families or into permanent legal guardians. Our recommendations would give the states new incentives to focus on getting children these safe, permanent families, and they would give them more freedom to tailor services to meet children's needs. They put more money in the right places and demand more accountability for the public dollars that are used.

First we called for preserving the federal foster care maintenance as a federal entitlement to the states, but with improvements. Currently the federal government contributes a portion of the cost of foster care only for children whose family income is below the 1996 AFDC standard. The states, in contrast, have to pay for every child in foster care. We eliminate the income requirement, or de-link the federal foster care payments from AFDC. In the name of justice we propose treating Indian children and children who live in our territories the same as every other child in the United States who seeks the protection of foster care.

Second, we demand – we are recommending providing federal guardianship assistance to children who leave foster care and live with a permanent legal guardian. This subsidized guardianship would become an important route to a permanent home.

Third, we call for the creation of an indexed “safe children strong families” grant. It would combine what our currently Title IV-B, Title IV-E administration and Title IV-E training. Together, these sources represent more than half of the federal dollars in Title IV-E and Title IV-B, most of which can only be used at present after a child has entered foster care. Under our proposal, this money could be used flexibly so that the states can build a range of services to protect children in their own homes, to promote safe family reunification, or to move children to new families formed through adoption or guardianship, and may help those new families stay strong and stable. We recommend that to this grant be added \$200 million in the first year. This, we hope, will reassure states that they can always count on this grant, and in addition we apply an index, which is specifically CPI plus 2 percent, to this fund so that it grows as the states begin to get used to it and begin to apply it in the ways that they will.

Fourth, we recommend that when states reduce foster care, they be permitted to reinvest the federal dollars saved into their “safe children strong families” grant. That means that the entitlement monies which might be unused as the states move more children from foster care, move over into the flexible grant where they can be used for various kinds of child welfare. We believe this is another incentive to the states to focus on permanency.

Fifth, to promote innovation and improve practices, we call for expanding and simplifying the child welfare waiver process. We recommend providing incentives to state to improve their child welfare workforce and then increase all forms of safe permanence, either adoption, guardianship, or reunification. And finally, we call for a stronger accountability through improvements to the child and family services review process.

Moving on to the court area -- as you know, no child enters or leaves foster care without a judge’s decision. Courts are crucial to the system. Despite this critical role, the dependency courts often lack sufficient tools and information to move children swiftly out of foster care into permanent homes. The Pew Commission’s recommendation focuses on ensuring that courts have what they need to fulfill their responsibilities to children and to the public trust. We call on every dependency court to adopt performance measures and use the information to improve their oversight of children in foster care. When judges can track and analyze their caseloads, they can identify and deal with sources of delay, and they can identify children that may need this special attention.

Case tracking also provides critical information to chief justices as they assess the needs and overall performance of dependency court. To jumpstart these efforts, we call on Congress to appropriate \$10 million already authorized in the Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts Act, SANCA, for this purpose.

Next we have recommended incentives and requirements to effective collaboration between courts and child welfare agencies on behalf of children in foster care. These include new requirements that states and courts describe the collaboration in their state plans, and in court improvement program plans, as well as joint training and the establishment of state foster care commissions to promote this collaboration.

Third, we recommend overall measures to give children and parents a stronger voice in court and more effective representation. For example, we're asking Congress to appropriate \$5 million of already authorized funds for expansion of the court-appointed special advocates, CASA, program. We also call on the courts to require training for attorneys in this field and that that courts be organized in ways that permit and encourage direct participation by the children in proceedings that have a dramatic effect on their lives.

Finally, for all of this to happen, we call on the chief justices and other court leaders and state legislatures to make children a high priority in the courts. We ask the chiefs to place oversight responsibility for the dependency courts directly in their offices. We recommend they create dedicated courts to hear dependency cases and to build and support a corps of experienced dependency court judges. Finally, we recommend that they promote standards that encourage best practices in every dependency court.

As a commission working together, we sought practical recommendations to improve outcomes for children. We weren't just fussing with numbers or playing make-believe. We were looking at outcomes. We sought recommendations that could win the support of Congress and the administration and the various state officials and court leadership. We're encouraged by the positive responses that we've received, and we're optimistic about our chances. We recognize these are difficult budget times, but as Vice Chairman Gray pointed out, they are also times in which certain subjects like foster care seem to rise above the normal partisanship and the normal priority setting that is found in Congress.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce two commission members who will carry the ball from this point. The first will be Maura Corrigan, the chief justice of the Supreme Court of the state of Michigan. Second will be Helen Jones-Kelley, who is the manager of the Montgomery County welfare system, and first I would like to call on Chief Justice Maura Corrigan.

(Applause.)

MAURA CORRIGAN: Thank you. Good morning. I thank Chairman Frenzel and I also want to say that serving on this commission has been one of the great highlights of my life as a public official. So I'm very grateful for the opportunity.

Chairman Frenzel gave you an overview of the commission's recommendations for court oversight. I'm going to try to put some flesh on those bones and to use illustrations from Michigan to support this.

Our nation's courts determine whether a child has been abused or neglected. They decide whether a child returns home or is placed in foster care. Courts terminate parental rights and finalize adoption. These are weighty responsibilities and the problems that courts face are huge. Courts are awash in dependency cases. The attorneys who practice in this area are often overworked, inadequately trained and underpaid. Additionally, although courts share responsibility for these cases with executive branch agencies, frequently we don't do a good job of communicating with one another or working together. And we know that birth parents and other interested parties often don't get the chance to communicate with the courts, so the result is that children languish in the court system instead of advancing toward permanency.

Chairman Frenzel listed four recommendations – four principal recommendations in the area of court oversight. Each one of these is critical to improving the lot of children in foster care. Let me take our last recommendation first; that is that each state's highest court assume responsibility for the way that children in foster care are treated. Leadership from the states' highest court is essential to improve the way that courts deal with these cases. A lack of leadership is a lack of accountability.

In our state we have established a new office, the position of Child Welfare Services within our state court administrator's office. The director oversees all the family courts dealing with these cases, and we are fortunate that she has a great deal of expertise in these cases. I work directly with her to make sure that these cases get the attention they deserve. Let me put it quite simply: the buck stops here with the leadership in the states' highest court, and that's why we are calling on every chief justice in the United States to establish similar positions in their states.

Here's another example of why top-down leadership is essential. Two years ago, a 15-year-old foster child named Heather Kish was found murdered in Monroe, Michigan. She had run away from her court-ordered placement. This tragedy riveted my court's attention on our state's other missing foster children. At any given time, of the 19,000 children in foster care in my state, approximately 300 are missing. To respond to this problem, our Supreme Court ordered the chief judges in the family courts to devise a plan with the child welfare agencies to find the missing children. What this meant is that the judge holds a hearing, calls in the social worker and anyone else who has information about the child. The chief judge then reports to the Supreme Court about the progress they're making in locating these children.

I'm pleased to say that as a result of this joint effort, last year we located 75 percent of the children who were missing from foster care placements. And this successful effort illustrates the second of our recommendations, that is that courts collaborate with the child welfare agencies. Collaboration, case tracking, and information sharing are precisely what we recommend. You know, we in government are acutely aware of the separation of powers among the three branches. We learn this in school, and we think it's really important. But the distinctions among the three branches

do not matter to a child in foster care. It is incumbent on each of us across the branches to collaborate for the sake of these children.

Notice also that our efforts to reform depend very much on our ability to track the cases in the courts. If you can't track the case, you can't find the missing foster child, and you can't check whether the child is advancing on the road to permanency. And that is our next recommendation, that we need the resources, the training and the performance standards, all the tools that are required to do a good job.

Here's another example that we found. Nationally we know that many lawyers do not meet with their child clients. To get at this problem in my state we started enforcing the statutory requirement that the lawyers meet with the children. We know that the lawyers can be very effective in moving a child toward permanency and we also know that the children don't have any voice in the process without effective representation.

So this brings me to our final recommendation for the courts, that the courts give the families and the children a voice in the proceedings. We know that birth parents and relatives and caregivers often don't get notice of hearings and don't understand their opportunity to participate, and so courts are deprived of valuable information that they could use to protect children or make a permanent placement.

So all four of our recommendations boil down to this: we're doing our best – want to do our best to provide security, safety, and permanence for foster children.

Now, some people say that people in the United States are just not interested in these children. I decline to believe that. Anybody who thinks that we don't have a problem with children in legal limbo should stand in my shoes for a few days and you would know the dire results: crime and poverty and homelessness and a renewed cycle of abuse and neglect. The children who never have a permanent home will be back in our court system in large numbers. Whatever price we pay to improve the system will be small compared with the price of failure.

Thank you very much for your attention this morning.

HELEN JONES-KELLEY: Good morning. Each of my colleagues here has expressed this commission's firm resolve to ensure that all of our recommendations promote greater safety, stability and security for abused and neglected children while also ensuring greater public accountability for what happens to every child whose life we touch.

As a child welfare county administrator, I know firsthand that for many children foster care is an absolute necessity, a critical lifeboat for children who have been abused and neglected in their own homes. The foster care system was designed to protect our nation's most vulnerable children, and it often succeeds in doing just that. Yet I'm also keenly aware that there is much more that must be done.

Foster care is a vital lifeboat, but we must take care not to overload it or it will sink. And for those who do need it, we just still ferry those children to safe shores. I'm proud to have served on this commission, and I'm confident that if our recommendations were fully implemented, every child in every family that I serve in Ohio would benefit. Taken together, our recommendations would promote and reward good practice, practice that focuses on the unique needs of each child and family in the context of their community and culture. Let me talk about them in a bit more detail.

I want to begin by underscoring the importance of a shared state and federal partnership in keeping all children safe. This shared responsibility should not depend on the income of the family from which a family is removed. With this commission's recommendation to remove income eligibility criteria for foster care and adoption funding, we'll not only be doing what's right for children, we'll also be freeing up caseworker and administrative time that can be better spent directly serving children and families. In my county this will make a tremendous difference. I would be able to ensure that my caseworkers have more of the time they need to make sure that the families they work with receive the appropriate services in order to keep children safe and to get them into permanent homes as quickly as possible.

Extending this protection to children in Indian tribes and those living in U.S. territories is also the right thing to do. Adding assistant guardianship as a permanence option will also allow us to provide the best of all worlds for many of our children. There are a number of children in our system for whom neither adoption nor reunification is a viable option, but these children still need a forever family. Assisted legal guardianship will give them that, and at the same time it will allow them to maintain ties with their siblings and other family members. This recommendation would be especially valuable as we seek security and stability for the adolescents in our care.

The flexibility of the new indexed "safe children strong families" grant would allow me to frontload my system so that more children can remain safely in their own homes. You know, as the system is now, we end up removing children when they could remain safely at home if we had the appropriate services to offer them. We often intervene with a sword when a scalpel would do.

This grant will give me, as an administrator, the opportunity to shore up families that are experiencing a short-term crisis and develop the spectrum of services that would allow children to return home sooner. This new flexibility would also allow me to provide better training opportunities for our caseworkers and all of our partners in the child protection system. It would give me the wonderful opportunity to provide cross training with our colleagues in the judicial community. With such an approach, everyone in the chain of care will go about their work with a similar purpose, a similar philosophy, and similar skills.

I would like to end with a few words about accountability. At commission meetings we discussed accountability a lot. I'm a strong believer that our system needs to be more accountable to both the children and to the public that we serve. The

commission's recommendations, particularly those concerning data collection, would create an accountability system that is reflective of how we are doing today -- not how we did months ago or years ago but right now. With improved and more timely measurements we would be able to do a better job of meeting children's needs on their timetable. I think every administrator would love the opportunity to operate a system this way.

Families are the lynchpins of our society. We need to make sure they are all safe and stable. This commission's recommendations would get us all a lot closer to reaching that goal. To be successful, the child welfare system must not only provide the lifeboats for those children who need them, but we must carefully guide those children to protection, to safe shores. Working together, we can get it done.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. FRENZEL: Thank you very much, Helen and Maura.

The commission is now ready to take questions. We'd prefer that the questions come from press. We'd like each questioner to identify himself or herself. There is, somewhere around here, people with microphones. There's one right there, and there are some others. And so, whosoever got a microphone --

Q: (Off mike.)

MR. FRENZEL: Could you repeat, please?

Q: Muriel Dobbin with McClatchy Newspapers. Can you tell me what the reasons are for the doubling of the number of children in foster care since the early '80s, which the report indicates.

MR. FRENZEL: I'm sorry, would you repeat --

Q: Can you tell me what the reason is for the doubling of the numbers of children in foster care since the early '80s?

MR. FRENZEL: Anybody on the commission can tell us why the number of children in foster care have doubled since the early '80s?

CAROL WILSON SPIGNER: I'll take it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. FRENZEL: Carol Spigner -- Dr. Spigner.

MS. SPIGNER: I think if you look at the data closely, between 1980 and 1985 you see a decline, a significant decline in the number of children in foster care, and then

you see a shift in the opposite direction from 1985 on. We think that there are multiple factors that influence that. If you recall, that was the point at which the crack cocaine epidemic increased, and we saw families becoming more and more fragile. In addition, some of the resources that existed through public policy to provide prevention and early intervention services began to shrivel. And I would just also say that we also are finding families in more difficult situations that are byproduct of the economic environment in which they find themselves.

MR. FRENZEL: Thank you, Dr. Spigner.

Q: Hi. I'm Patrice Pascual. I'm the deputy director of the Casey Journalism Center on Children and Families. We work with reporters around the nation who cover kids and families.

Are the nature of -- this conclusion that you start off with that the current federal financing system encourages over-reliance on foster care at the expense of other options, is that indictment of ASFA? Is there ASFA data that you're saying this is going in the wrong direction, or are these recommendations to simply improve ASFA and get some better results?

MR. FRENZEL: Helen? Please, I didn't hear a word of it. I hope you heard some.

MS. JONES-KELLEY: The question was if it's an indictment of ASFA that we are talking about, the federal financing needing to be changed because too many children come into care. I'm paraphrasing you. Am I capturing what you --

Q: (Off mike.)

MS. JONES-KELLEY: Okay. And it's not an indictment of ASFA, it is rather an indictment of the way in which our federal IV-E funding operates, funding that was put into place so many years ago for the right reasons but now doesn't operate to serve the children who are currently part of the system. It was set of for children, primarily orphans, who needed to have some care for a temporary period of time. The system operates to serve children who are in out-of-home placement. Unfortunately, we find that we often remove kids from home, marginal homes that would be able to operate safely for their children but for the fact that we can't put that funding there. The federal funding only operates for children who are removed from their own homes and placed with strangers in foster care. We can't provide that same set of services for children in their own homes.

So it's a reality check for us in terms of looking at how we were allowing the funding to follow children, and could we do more for children and their families to create stability and security for those kids in their own homes.

Q: (Off mike.)

MS. JONES-KELLEY: It's succeeding to some extent and I think we want to build on the small successes we've realized. Funding is going to be the crucial piece for that, and allowing that funding shift to occur to allow more flexibility to states to use the dollars to frontload the system will be key in making ASFA really successful.

Q: Theola Labbé, Washington Post. Who are the specific public officials that need to respond to this report so that it is put into action, or if you intend to take a more proactive approach, who are the public officials that you intend to lobby to see that these results are put into action?

MR. FRENZEL: First of all, with respect to the financing recommendations, we have to talk to the administration. We have seen a number of members of Congress. We will continue to see them, particularly the committees of jurisdiction, which are the Ways and Means Committee and the Finance Committee in the Senate. In addition, however, as Chief Justice Corrigan pointed out, we have to deal with all 50 court systems and with their chief justices. We have to deal with the states, and probably the quickest way to do that is through the National Council of State Legislators. The selling of this program requires much work and it is really only beginning now that it is being released. And those are the principal people that we will be talking to.

Bill, would you like to amplify?

MR. GRAY: I would just call your attention to a statement I think was put out today by the chairman of the Subcommittee of Ways and Means in the House of Representatives with regard to this report calling it a very positive contribution, and one that ought to be pursued. That's the kind of – those are the kind of people that need to listen to this commission and the recommendations since so much of it is focused on federal financing.

MS. RIMEL: May I follow up?

MR. FRENZEL: Yes, please.

MS. RIMEL: The Pew Trust also has a project we've initiated called Fostering Results. It's engaged in public education and will advocate for the implementation of these recommendations. The commission has done yeoman's service, but they need advocates out in the field to make sure that these recommendations are implemented, and we hope that we'll have other partners joining us in that effort.

MR. FRENZEL: Thank you. Chief Justice Corrigan would like to comment.

MS. CORRIGAN: Thank you. With regard to the piece involving the courts and the chief justices, I'm pleased to recognize Kay Farley from the National Center for State Courts, and I'm pleased to report that we will be having time at the summer conference of chief justices to educate them with regard to these recommendations, and hopefully the

advocacy piece that needs to be done with the 50 states will be done as well. And I believe that Judge Macias may be able to speak to what's going on with the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges.

MR. FRENZEL: Judge?

MS. MACIAS: Well, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has also set standards for court performance, and these standards will then be distributed along with the other judicial organizations that are in conformity with these recommendations.

MR. FRENZEL: Bill? Any more?

MR. GRAY: I have nothing to add on top of that.

MR. FRENZEL: Okay, we are missing our state legislator, Angela Monson, who is our secret weapon for attacking the state legislatures. (Laughter.) Were she here I'm sure she'd exhibit her usual sunny optimism and say it was going to be a piece of cake. (Laughter.)

I see no hands in the air. All right, if there are no further questions, I hope all of you have the packets which were available here in addition to a few other handouts. I think you should know that the staff of the Pew Commission is available to answer questions that occur to you later. The members of the commission who are lucky enough to live within range of your cell phones will be delighted to respond as well.

And we welcome all of your comments and all of your questions, and we thank you very much for coming out here this morning, and we hope that you will join in perhaps what we over-dramatize as a crusade, but something that the people on this commission feel very strongly about, improved results for our children.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

(END)