



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2016

GUILLEN URGES SWIFT ACTION ON FOSTER CARE REFORM

AUSTIN – In response to recent reports of foster children still being made to sleep in state offices, State Representative Ryan Guillen (D - District 31) calls for swift action in turning around the broken system.

"It's been six months since the court ruled the system needed to be fixed, and yet we're still hearing stories of sub-human treatment of these kids who need a home," responded Guillen. "I fully acknowledge that a complete, long-term solution will require legislative action. But in the meantime, I suspect there's more that can be done to improve how we're treating these kids right now."

Recently, the Austin-American Statesman reported that most recent available data revealed that 67 Texas foster children slept in state offices in the months of March and April of this year. The article explains that the recent spike in children sleeping in state offices was caused by a number of factors, including a shortage of foster parents, the rising numbers of children who have been removed from troubled homes, and the recent closure of four residential treatment centers for foster children.

The article continues to describe the makeshift living quarters:

In one of the Austin offices, a bathroom with a full bathtub and a room stocked with toiletries are ready for any overnight stays. Caseworkers can flip four visitation rooms into bedrooms with cots, sheets, pillows, television, toys and games. Despite the fluorescent lights and linoleum tiles, caseworkers have tried to make the rooms as kid-friendly as possible.

"The fact that makeshift bedrooms are being made is evidence that CPS and its caseworkers are going above and beyond to help the kids," added Guillen. "There's no single entity to blame for this issue, but nonetheless, the system is broken and something needs to be done."

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